



THE INDEPENDENT

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WEATHER: Sunshine and showers

40p (IR 45P)



The Tabloid
Phil Hammond, MD: Just don't call a doctor



The Tabloid
Fashion: New girl on the block

In the Tabloid
Women Work
A 16-page supplement on the changing world of women and work

Lethal bug in apple juice

Ian Burrell

The deadly E-coli bacterium which last week killed five people in the Scottish food poisoning epidemic can be spread by milk and apple juice as well as by meat, according to government scientists.

The Independent has learned that two elderly women died and 12 others were struck down last year in a similar outbreak, which was kept secret.

Scientists have started an investigation into the rising number of cases of E-coli 0157 food poisoning. Researchers from the Public Health Laboratory Service (PHLS), part of the Department of Health, said that E-coli was being passed on by an increasing number of products, including milk and potatoes, but that the scientists had little understanding of how cross-

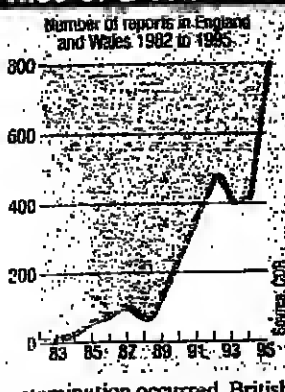
and that a quantity of cold-meat stock had been destroyed.

Several victims are pursuing private legal actions against the butcher.

He added that public health officials were becoming increasingly concerned at the variety of food products acting as a vehicle for the E-coli bacterium, which was previously thought to be contained only in undercooked beef. "We are seeing a wider number of vehicles for transmission than previously suspected," he said.

"We have seen a number of recent cases of cross contamination to ham and sausage. In the US it has been found in apple juice; in Sheffield it was in milk, and there are reports from Japan of it being found in sprouting radishes. Just how the cross-contamination occurs we do not know."

Rise of E-coli cases



contamination occurred. British cases of E-coli 0157 have risen from 53 in 1985 to 1,046 last year. Yesterday a Scottish hospital which is treating the bulk of the 282 victims of the latest E-coli epidemic said it was swamped and had closed its doors to non-emergency patients.

A previous outbreak, in Sunderland, Tyne and Wear, in August last year, was not made public at the time because the Government was already trying to alleviate fears over the safety of beef in the BSE scare.

David Tregoning, consultant in public health medicine at Sunderland Health Authority, said that the source of the poisoning was quickly pinpointed to one Sunderland butcher's shop and there had been no need to go public. "The infection was concentrated on a fairly small area," he said.

The butcher at the centre of the scare was closed for an environmental health inspection but, on the advice of local authority scientists, no prosecution was brought.

Mr Tregoning said that the infection was likely to have been spread by mis-handling of meat,

The PHLS study, which began in May, was set up to identify the risk factors of E-coli 0157, and the types of products that acted as vehicles. The research was ordered by the Department of Health after concern that there had been 28 major outbreaks of E-coli 0157 since 1992 and 17 of them had resulted from food-borne transmission.

The bacterium had been carried by raw potatoes, milk and yoghurt as well as turkey-roll sandwiches and the minced beef products which were commonly regarded as the likely source. It is also spread by contact with animals.

Meanwhile, scientists in America and Canada have traced an outbreak of E-coli 0157, which struck down 45 people last month, to a supply of unpasteurised apple juice.

In Scotland, the Monklands Hospital in Airdrie, Lanarkshire, has taken on an extra 12 nurses to deal with 32 adults and one child who are being treated in the hospital for illness caused by the food bug.

The epidemic, which has been linked to a butcher in Wishaw, Lanarkshire, has led to 57 people - 48 adults and nine children - being treated in hospitals throughout Scotland. Nearly 1,000 people have contacted a helpline set up to deal with the concerns of the public.

In Parliament yesterday, Michael Forsyth, the Secretary of State for Scotland, denied he had misled the Commons over the epidemic, and repeated his assertion that it had been a decision by the local authority, North Lanarkshire Council - and not the Scottish Office - not to release a list of food suppliers linked to the food poisoning until five days after it broke out.



Kenneth Clarke: A change of policy on the single currency would be 'senseless'

Photograph: David Modell/IPS

Clarke puts a Euro arm lock on Major

Anthony Bevins
London
Sarah Helm

Kenneth Clarke yesterday put a political armlock on No 10, blocking any attempt by the Prime Minister to jettison the Tories' wait-and-see policy on the European single currency.

Repudiating repeated reports that John Major was tempted to rule out British participation in the first wave of the single currency for the lifetime of a new Parliament, the Chancellor of the Exchequer made it crystal clear that his position would become untenable if that happened.

"I don't believe that for one moment anything of that kind is being contemplated," he told BBC radio's *Today* programme.

Even the most diehard Conservative opponents of a single currency conceded last night that Mr Clarke's words closed off their escape route from a single currency. Mr Clarke would be unable to remain as Chancellor defending a "senseless" policy in an election campaign - and Mr Major would risk splitting his party wide open if he forced his Chancellor to resign.

That one word from the Chancellor, "senseless", has turned private threats into a public ultimatum. The Government's present policy on the single currency - that a decision will be taken when the precise terms of membership are known - has been designed to keep both sides of the Conservative Party together.

The policy was reaffirmed by Mr Major during the Conservative Party conference in October, and Michael Heseltine, the deputy prime minister, said only on Sunday that there would be no change in the standing policy agreement.

In spite of that the Euro-

sceptic *Daily Telegraph* yesterday carried a front-page report saying that Mr Major had the backing of 18 of 22 Cabinet members for an "historic policy shift in favour of fighting the election on a pledge to keep the pound".

A senior Conservative Central Office source told *The Independent* last night that he "did not recognise" the *Telegraph* story. That tends to confirm the widespread Whitehall suspicion that Mr Major's own political staff is sending out signals in an attempt to weaken Mr Clarke's will to resist.

If that is the case, the terms of his Radio 4 reply should be enough to convince No 10 that it has lost the unequal struggle.

"The *Daily Telegraph* is owned and edited by people who hold extremely anti-European views," Mr Clarke said from Brussels.

"The Prime Minister and I were on the platform together at the party conference about six weeks ago uniting our party around a sensible policy... The idea that six weeks later we are all talking about changing it is quite preposterous in my view."

The Chancellor, who will wind up tonight's Budget debate in the Commons, yesterday braved the latest bout of Euro-scepticism as he met fellow finance ministers in Brussels for a meeting to discuss rules and fines for the single currency, under the so-called "stability pact". The pact, proposed by Germany, envisages a system of strict fines for countries which over-spend after the launch of the Euro.

An ICM poll for the *Guardian* last night showed that Labour had increased its lead over the Conservatives to 19 percentage points, putting Labour on 50 per cent (up three points), the Tories on 31 per cent (down three points), and the Liberal Democrats on 15 per cent (no change).

Euro strikes fear, page 13

The cappuccino crisis that nearly sent London down the Tubes

Barrie Clement
Labour Editor

London Underground services came within a whisker of a shutdown by maintenance workers keen to protect their inalienable right to a cappuccino break.

The tastes of the British worker seem to have moved on since the 1960s. In those days the working man would defend the right to a tea break. And tea meant tea. Not coffee, not fruit juice and certainly not fizzy water. The tea was brewed in a white enamel can, sweet, hot, dark and barely liquid.

Now the white cans are long gone and the quaint habit of tea drinking is increasingly associated with the more senior shopfloor operatives. As part of a productivity deal in

1993, the 600 workers at London Underground's Action works finally relinquished their twice-a-day 20 minute tea break. Tube management agreed that in return they would instal machines for the free dispensation of a whole range of hot beverages.

The workforce turned up its collective nose at the tea available from new machines installed a month ago which was regarded as more axle grease than Assam. Instead they took to the milk-based beverages: some to hot chocolate, but most to cappuccino.

Keen to save money, however, management withdrew the milk-based cappuccino and hot chocolate options, leaving tea and ordinary coffee. London Underground yesterday however said it wasn't their fault. Tube management were paying 4 to 5p a

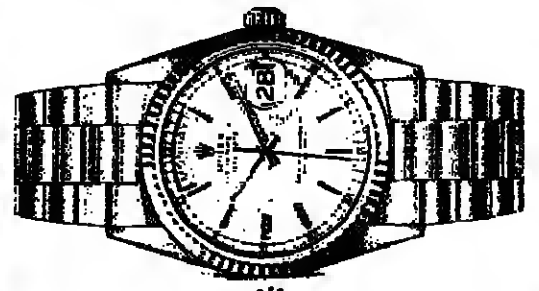
cup, but caterers complained that milk-based drinks were costing them 18p to produce. Within days the whole plant was threatened with a strike by shop stewards assailed by colleagues itching to walk out unless the "cappuccino option" was reinstated.

Officials from the RMT transport union were called to the plant last week and left in no doubt by their members that they would strike unless the "status quo" was re-established. Tube managers then caved in and cappuccino is now back on tap.

Jimmy Knapp, the tea-drinking general secretary of the RMT said: "I've no doubt that board members have a good selection of teas and coffees at board meetings and my members deserve nothing less."

Leading article, page 13

WHERE
TO ACQUIRE
A TASTE
FOR OYSTERS



ROLEX
of Geneva

The seamless Oyster shell of a Rolex chronometer is hewn from a single block of stainless steel. 18ct. gold or platinum. Within it lies a self-winding movement that has taken over a year to create. With prices starting at £1,400, the Oyster you always promised yourself is available from the Harrods Watch Department on the Ground Floor. Not, we might add, from the Food Hall.

Harrods

Harrods, Knightsbridge SW1X 7NL. Telephone 0171-730 1234.

*Watch shown available in 18ct. yellow gold priced £10,420, white gold £11,140 and platinum £17,990

QUICKLY

Serbs take to streets

Tens of thousands of Serbs defied government warnings and demonstrated against President Slobodan Milosevic as the authorities contemplated using force to end two weeks of street unrest in Belgrade. Page 11

French defy fish ban

Ten French fishing boats defied a British ban and entered a restricted area of Channel Island waters. Fisheries inspectors took notes. Page 3

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news

The case for saying yes to Finnish industry

That old tart John Marshall, the Tory member for Hendon South, does not have to be seduced by the whips to ask tame questions to ministers – he is quite happy to perform the act unpaid. So his usual contribution to Scots or Welsh questions is to table a query such as this: “To ask the Secretary of State if he will make a statement about recent projects relating to inward investment in Wales”. His oral supplementary will invariably consist of an invitation to the minister to contrast the present massive drive by everyone in the Far East to set up factories in Wales, with the economic devastation likely to follow in the wake of a minimum wage, adherence to the social



Until the Welsh get Hollywood billing, no one is going to take their Assembly seriously. Least of all themselves.

chapter and a Welsh Assembly. So it was yesterday – though Mr Marshall managed a final rhetorical flourish. Would the minister “confirm to Finnish industrialists that they are welcome in Wales, even if Finnish nurses are not welcome in Hackney”. Experienced drivers will tell you that it is possible, given the state of roadworks on the North Circular, to take a wrong turn and end up in the Principality. Even so, one wondered where Mr Marshall’s breezy confidence about the Welsh actually came from. By chance Lady Olga Maitland (Con, Sutton and Cheam) had almost exactly the same question as Mr Marshall, though her

constituency occupies a similar geographical position relative to the inner ring road as Mr Marshall’s, save that it is south of the Thames. At least Robert Hughes (Con, Harrow West) has the name for it, but he wanted to ask about a Welsh Assembly which would be “a financial disaster for Wales”. (Having stood outside the Catalan Assembly in Barcelona – the most vibrant city in Europe – and seen the well-heeled matrons dance the *sardania*, I do not quite comprehend the connection some MPs make between devolution and economic collapse.) Compared with his colleagues, Geoffrey Clifton-Brown (Cirencester and Tewkesbury) is positively Welsh. On a fine day you can

practically see Wales from his stately home. And Geoffrey knows what true democracy is. So could he congratulate the minister on taking the Welsh Grand Committee around Wales, and “actually bringing government closer to the people”? Intrigued, I phoned the Welsh Office. Where had it been? Where was it going? Perhaps it would be hosted in the castles of Wales, from Kidwelly in the south to Chirk in the North? Er, no. It had met at Cardiff, would meet next in London, there had been some thoughts about Carmarthen, and Bangor might be nice. So my question is this: why do the Welsh put up with it? This is, after all, the nation of Llewellyn ap Gruffydd, Owen

Glendwyn, of the red dragon on the green hill, of the Men of Harlech. Wales has its burned villages, ravished maidens and pillaged churches, its heroes and traitors, its woad and pike rebellions. And yet Mel Gibson will not painfully be shaping the accents of Old North Wales around the vowels of New South Wales. They won’t be packing the Monica cinema in Rŏrŏwina to see the forebears of Mr Marshall and Lady Olga stagger around with pieces of Celtic ironware protruding from their bodies. They must rectify this. For until the Welsh do get proper Hollywood billing, no one is going to take them and their Assembly seriously. Least of all themselves.

Surgeon steps down over deaths inquiry

The work of a distinguished heart surgeon is being investigated after the trust he works for was criticised for having above-average paediatric cardiac deaths, it was announced yesterday. James Wisheart has voluntarily stepped down from clinical duties and from his post as medical director of the United Bristol Healthcare NHS Trust in order to co-operate with the independent review. The decision followed two years of controversy at the Bristol Royal Infirmary where Mr Wisheart was an influential member of the cardiac unit using a pioneering technique to operate on babies. But the operations were later halted after an internal audit revealed higher-than-average number of deaths among children between 1990 and 1995. An internal review revealed friction among senior staff and a subsequent inquiry has now decided that although case notes show deaths were average, Mr Wisheart’s performance will be investigated by a panel of experts. *Louise Jury*

Couple's honeymoon of horror

A couple who married after meeting in a mental hospital kidnapped and attempted to murder a taxi driver and then snatched a six-year-old boy in a “honeymoon” of horror, a court heard yesterday. Douglas Byelung, 56, and his wife Julie, 26, admitted at Winchester Crown Court the kidnapping and attempted murder of Mark Slater, an offence of affray and the kidnapping of the boy. Mr Justice Mummery made an interim hospital order against Julie Byelung who absconded from the Whittingham Hospital near Preston. Byelung, who had been released into care in the community, will go to Broadmoor. Mr Richard Onslow, prosecuting, described how, armed with knives, the couple then kidnapped and stabbed a taxi driver in Petersfield, Hampshire, killed a woman’s dog and kidnapped a terrified six-year-old boy who had been playing on his bike outside a public house.

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Council pays for coining it

A council and Europe’s largest private mint yesterday escaped with paying costs of £250 after admitting breaching British coinage law by introducing a euro-style coin. Isle of Wight Council, which had 12,000 tokens minted last year to raise funds for charity, and Pobjoy Mint of Sutton, Surrey, were given an absolute discharge by a stipendiary magistrate in Newport. The Treasury said the tokens breached an 1812 coinage law, because they displayed a £2 value.

Eigg bids again for island

The Hebridean island of Eigg was last night back up for sale after its owner turned down a bid its inhabitants. However, islanders said they would continue with their attempts to raise money and end what they see as years of misery at the hands of absentee landlords. The owner, Marlin Eckhardt Maruma, a German artist, is asking for £2m. Another offer was also turned down and the island is now back on the market. However, a statement from the firm said: “... Mr Eckhardt Maruma has agreed to leave the island on the market to enable those who offered, and anybody else who might wish to do so, more time to raise the necessary funds to meet the asking price of £2m.”

Drink gang boss jailed

A man described by a judge as the “executive director” in a multi-million pound alcohol bootlegging operation was jailed for five years yesterday. Anthony Spencer, 38, whose gang was known as The Libyans, was convicted at Maidstone Crown Court of evading duty between April and December 1994, during which about £4m worth of goods was brought in through Dover. The loss to the taxpayer was around £2m. Judge David Croft, QC, was told that Spencer had assets to cover costs totalling £700,000.

Girls given two years for manslaughter

Two schoolgirls were ordered to serve two years’ detention after admitting kicking a 13-year-old girl to death. The two girls, then aged 12 and 13, each kicked Louise Allen once to the head in the incident at a fairground in Corby, Northamptonshire in April, Nottingham Crown Court was told. There had been a number of violent fights at the fair in the previous week, including one involving both the defendants. At an earlier hearing the pair, who cannot be named for legal reasons, admitted manslaughter. Yesterday they stood impassively as Mr Justice Hadden told them: “It was wicked violence and it resulted in the totally unnecessary death of that young girl.” The sentence was greeted with anger by Louise’s family and by the police with “extreme disappointment”.

THE INDEPENDENT ABROAD			
Austria	£340	Norway	£55.00
Belgium	£360	Italy	£45.00
Canada	£300	Malta	£35.00
Cyprus	£21.20	Norway	£55.00
Denmark	£18.10	Portugal	£35.00
Finland	£14.50	Spain	£35.00
France	£34.50	Sweden	£35.00
Germany	£34.50	Switzerland	£44.00
Greece	£34.50	USA	£30.00
Luxembourg	£34.50		



A student, Helen Sutton, being inoculated yesterday at Cardiff University

Photograph: Huw Evans

1,000 vaccinated after two die of meningitis

Tony Heath and Glenda Cooper

The parents of two teenage students who died in the Cardiff meningitis outbreak paid tribute to their daughters last night as William Hague, the Secretary of State for Wales, told MPs that “all possible means” were being used to contain the outbreak. The deaths of Ann-Marie Connor, 19, a first-year law student of London, and Samantha Milroy, a first-year pharmacy student of Stockport, Greater Manchester, left tutors and fellow undergraduates at the University College of Wales, Cardiff “devastated”. More than 1,000 students, university staff and visiting parents have been inoculated against the disease. Health officials said

that over 90 per cent of their target figure for immunisation had been reached, although they were still trying to trace 30 or 40 students who shared the same accommodation block as the five confirmed cases. Ms O'Connor, 19, an only child, was a prize-winning public speaker and was described by Professor Robert Lee, head of Cardiff law school, as “extremely bright and capable”. “She had an outstanding future ahead of her,” he said. Her mother called her “a high achiever in everything she did”, and added: “She was popular and had lots of friends and made many more at Cardiff.” In a statement, Ms Milroy’s parents said: “We are proud of our daughter and all she achieved in her short life. All we

have left are many happy memories of us together. This is our and Samantha’s tragedy. There is no point trying to look for any reason in it. There is none.” Dr Keith Brain, Ms Milroy’s tutor, said: “Her death has been devastating news to academic and administrative staff and her fellow students.” Yesterday 32 people were admitted to the University of Wales Hospital, with a variety of symptoms. Eight were due to be discharged later yesterday evening. No one was regarded as having meningitis. Dr Bill Smith, public-health director of the Bro Taf Health Authority, stressed that no new cases of meningococcal infection had been confirmed and added that the cause of the outbreak had yet to be determined.

In another part of the hospital a 20-year-old male student, who has the type C meningococcal strain of the disease which killed the two women, remained critically ill in intensive care. Two others continued to make good progress. Mr Hague told MPs that detailed information about the epidemic would only be available when the results of medical tests were known, which might take several weeks. “I intend to await the report from the health authority on the outbreak before deciding whether to undertake any further inquiry,” he said. The students’ union was extending its telephone hot line into a 24-hour service. Around 1,700 calls had already been received by yesterday evening.

Students face spectre of illness

The shadow cast in yesterday’s sunshine by the 10-storey tower block dominating Cyncoed, one of Cardiff’s leafiest districts, seemed longer than usual. For 770 residents of University Hall, which has the tower block at its heart, the meningitis outbreak dominated student life. Students – there are 13,000 in Cardiff – continued to attend lectures throughout the city. They presented a mixed response to what they saw as a widespread predicament. Christopher Leech, a medical student, seemed relaxed. “Naturally, everyone is... extremely worried but the authorities appear to be acting very efficiently,” he said as went to consult his GP. “I’ve got a heavy cold” he said. John, a Gibraltarian who declined to give his surname, and who is studying accountancy, said: “Of course there was a bit of panic to start with. But I feel confident now and I expect to be back on the Rock for my 20th birthday on 31 December.” The outbreak has trapped a number of visitors to the hall. Alka Shah arrived on Friday from Keele University, where she is reading management studies. “There’s a lot of real stress – after all, two students have died. I just don’t know how long it will be before I can get back to my studies,” she said.

Students at a campus about half a mile away said they were baffled, because although they shared facilities with students at University Hall, they appeared to have received little attention. Nicola Kirkpatrick, a physical-education student from Wrexham, North Wales, said: “Some of us play hockey with students from the hall, use the same changing-rooms and showers.” Fellow students Annie Petherick and Lorraine Klamita concurred. Ms Klamita, who comes from Mauritius, was distressed to see the explanation about the illness have been left for us to pick up, and that’s about it.”

Rhodri Morgan, MP for Cardiff West and Labour’s Welsh health spokesman, said there were questions demanding urgent answers. On BBC Radio Wales he said: “There was a case five weeks ago which was said to be completely unrelated to the recent ones. Can that really be true? It occurred in the same hall of residence.” And he asked whether the university authorities had made sufficient attempts to persuade students to stay put over the weekend. About 150 are understood to have left for the weekend on Friday night. By early afternoon yesterday most had reported back and had been vaccinated.

Victim of road rage stabbed 15 times

Charlie Bain

Police were yesterday hunting a road-rage killer who inflicted at least 15 stab wounds on a 25-year-old motorist, cutting his throat and leaving him for dead in a quiet country lane in Worcestershire. Lee Harvey, 25, from Alvechurch, Worcestershire, suffered at least 15 stab wounds and died in front of his helpless

girlfriend Tracey Andrews, 28. The attack happened when the couple were driving down a deserted lane in the Alvechurch area late on Sunday night. Ms Andrews, a mother of one, also from Alvechurch, witnessed the attack and suffered minor hand injuries. She was best comforted by her parents in the village last night and did not wish to comment. Detective Superintendent

Ian Johnston, leading the hunt for the killer, said the couple were travelling home after a night out at a pub in Bromsgrove in Mr Harvey’s white Ford Escort, when he overtook another vehicle. It appeared that the other car, believed to be an F-reg dark-coloured Ford Sierra in a tatty condition, overtook Mr Harvey’s car on the single track country lane and both vehicles

ground to a halt. Mr Johnston said: “An altercation took place between the two drivers. It was one of those sort of rows where there was some finger pointing and gesturing. It appears the argument was about the driving and linked to the overtaking manoeuvre that had occurred.” The driver of the other vehicle returned to his car and as he did so a passenger got out and approached Mr Harvey. Mr

Harvey was on his way back to his car but didn’t get there. He added: “I would like to appeal to the driver of the vehicle, that if he had nothing at all to do with this assault, if it was unplanned and on the spur of the moment, for him to come forward and put the record straight.” Police said the passenger was a white male, aged 25-26, around 5ft 9ins to 6ft tall, very

overweight and wearing a dark-coloured donkey jacket. The driver was a white male, around 18 or 19, with very short dark hair, 5ft 6ins to 5ft 8ins tall, slim, with a very young face. The murder is the second road-rage stabbing this year, following the death in May of Stephen Cameron, 21, during an argument with a motorist on a slip road off the M25 junction at Swanley, Kent.

**JOHN
PEEL'S
WIV
OF
FAMILY
LIFE.**

on life and the world of broadcasting
you his alternative view

Every week in Radio Times, John Peel gives
RadioTimes
IT'S NOT WHAT YOU EXPECT.

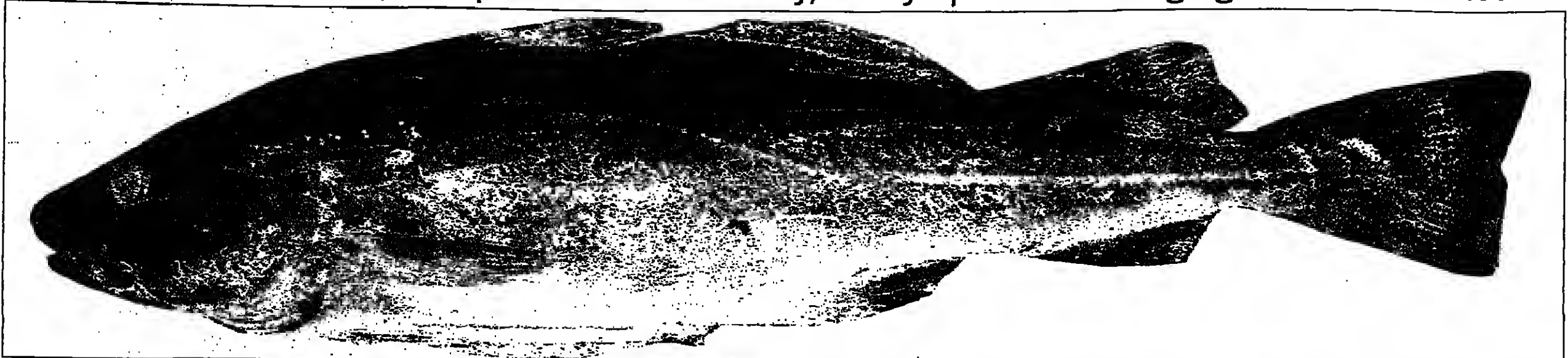
صكرا من الاميل

Who's
British a

Home
sets the

Who's losing the cod war? The cod

As the British and French squabble over territory, many species are edging closer to extinction



Facing stock collapse: The cod is the most threatened and largest of the main commercial species in British waters. Since a peak of more than 300,000 tonnes in 1992, the North Sea catch has fallen to one-third of that level

Nicholas Schoon
Environment Correspondent

The fishing industry never feels festive at this time of year. It feels tense. For this is the season when the European Union gears itself up to decide how much the continent's fishermen can catch in the seas around Britain.

The process began last month, with scientific advice on the state of the stocks from a body called the International Council for the Exploration of the Seas (ICES). As usual the advice was gloomy, pointing out that several of the most commercially important species such as cod are at a dangerously low level.

The process will end in a long, frantic night of horse-trading in Brussels in just over a fortnight, when EU fisheries ministers sort out the final quotas. Based on past experience, they will have to pressure from their fishing industries and allocate larger catches to their fleets than the scientists say is prudent.

And so, for another year, across the broad and shallow waters of Western Europe's continental shelf, fishermen risk a dramatic collapse in a species such as cod to the point where it no longer turns up in their nets. That would ruin tens of thousands of livelihoods, thousands of them in Britain.

The industry receives this warning each year. It is getting louder, because environmental groups now consider over-fishing in the North Sea a major issue.

The fishermen know that they catch and kill many more fish than their quotas allow. Huge quantities are thrown back into the sea, dead, because they are illegally small or the wrong kind, having caught their quota of one species, the fishermen go for another, but find the first species in their nets.

Apart from discards, there is a substantial but completely unknown quantity of "black fish" - species which are over-quota or for which boats have no licence, which are landed in the dead of night at ports around Europe, some in Britain.

The industry also knows stock collapses are a reality. It happened to North Sea herring and mackerel in the 1970s, and by 1978 an annual herring catch which had stood at more than 700,000 tons eight years earlier had fallen to nothing. Herring stocks recovered in the North Sea; mackerel has not.

Yet the fishermen know their prey are still out there in large numbers, and question the scientists' advice. Some believe the experts exaggerate the threat, knowing that bargaining over the quotas will inevitably reduce the cuts they suggest.

The cod is generally thought to be most at risk. It does not reach sexual maturity until the age of four, but the great majority in the North Sea and Western Approaches are caught before then. The national fisheries scientists gathered under ICES say the number of mature cod - the adults which must breed to produce future generations - is just over half the "minimum biological acceptable level" - below which the risk of stock collapse starts to escalate.

"The stock is considered to be outside safe biological limits," says the ICES report. It recommends a 20 per cent cut in catches, which it judges would have a 95 per cent chance of bringing cod stocks back to a healthy level within a few years.

It points out that such a cut is unlikely to be achieved simply by reducing the cod quota, because large numbers of the



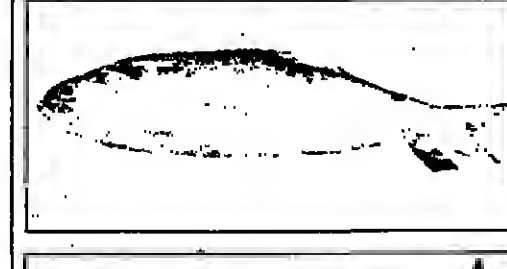
The endangered species



HADDOCK: A close relative of the cod and just as popular, battered up and wrapped in newspaper, in the nation's chip shops. It, too, lives on the seabed where it eats crabs and invertebrates. Smaller than cod, it reaches sexual maturity at three years old. It can grow up to 70 cms but rarely escapes trawler nets for long enough to do so.



PLAICE: Not the priciest of the flatfish, but the most abundant and commercially important. North Sea stocks have been declining through over-fishing, and are judged by scientists to be in danger of collapse - about 40 per cent are killed by fishing each year. The fish reaches sexual maturity at about three years, and in 15 years can grow to 75cm.



HERRING: A pelagic fish, swimming well above the sea bed and eating plankton. Grows to about 40cm in 10 years. Beloved by the British as kippers, hundreds of thousands of tonnes are caught each year in the North Sea to be made into tins and animal feeds. Stock collapsed spectacularly in the 1970s, and is in danger of doing so again.



MACKEREL: Another oily, pelagic fish which grows slightly larger than the herring. Huge quantities are caught for in an "industrial fishery" and processed in factories for oil and animal feed. Stocks in the North Sea collapsed in the 1970s and never recovered, but the quantities taken from waters further out to the west are rising.

threatened fish are caught by trawlers pursuing "mixed roundfish" - mainly a mixture of haddock and whiting.

Stocks of North Sea haddock are also judged to be below the "minimum biological acceptable level", and so are several other species. They include the North Sea herring, which is once again in danger, having recovered from its spectacular collapse in the 1970s.

Ideally, what is needed for all these threatened stocks is a serious, sustained laying-off of fishing. That would allow the number of breeding adults to recover to a level where more fish could probably be caught each

year than are taken now. EU governments seem highly unlikely to come up with the massive sums in compensation which fishermen would demand in return. And so the danger and the depletion continue.

Like his colleagues from other nations, the UK fisheries minister, Tony Baldry, is under pressure to reject any big quota cuts. "The Government will be particularly concerned whenever possible to avoid excessive year-on-year changes in quotas in order to avoid unnecessary displacement in the fishing industry," he said. But a collapse, if it comes, would be the ultimate disaster for fish and man alike.

Little armada sails in for the battle of Guernsey

Philip Jeune

Ten French fishing boats defied a British ban yesterday and entered a restricted area of Channel Island waters.

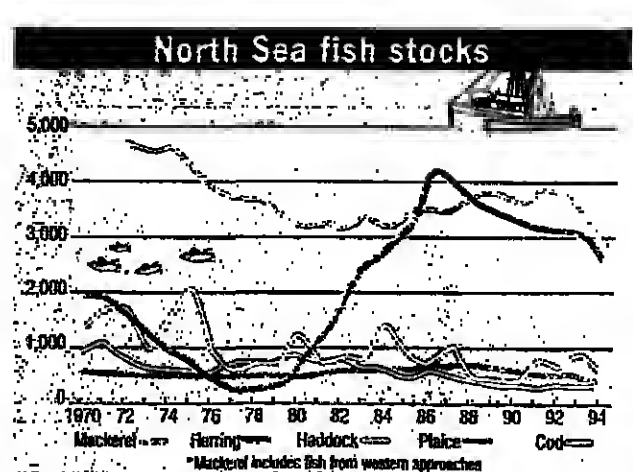
Sea Fisheries inspectors from Guernsey took the details of the boats, one of which was fishing, but no arrests were made.

The fishermen, from the Normandy port of Granville, were accompanied by a naval helicopter and a coast guard vessel, the *Cordaire*, which has apparently been ordered to intervene should any attempts be made to arrest the fishermen.

No Royal Navy patrol vessels were in the area. The only official British presence was inspector Stephen Ozanne and his colleagues in a chartered motorboat and a small inflatable.

The French fishermen are furious at Guernsey's decision to abandon a two-year-old agreement that permitted them to fish the area known as the Sark Box, and another area, the Haricot.

Guernsey withdrew from the agreement at midnight on Saturday but a shortage of diesel fuel due to the strike by French



lorry drivers, and 30-knot winds prevented the fishermen from making their protest until yesterday lunchtime. By then the winds had eased and the boats set sail for the Sark Box, which is to the south of Guernsey, arriving at around 2pm.

Although it is not thought likely that the British authorities will arrest the fishermen, Guernsey councillor Ron Le Maignan issued a strong warning on Sunday, promising to

man. "We are anxious that there should be talks as soon as possible to everyone's mutual agreement."

The French ministry, however, maintains that its fishermen have historic rights to enter the two areas under an agreement drawn up in 1839.

The fishing rights to the lucrative Channel Island waters have been disputed by the French for some years. In 1993 Mr Ozanne and fellow Sea Fisheries officer Ben Remfrey were kidnapped by the crew of a French fishing boat which they had boarded and taken to Carriacou.

They were immediately returned to Guernsey by the French police but the following day 39 French boats blockaded the entrance to St Peter Port, their crews demanding talks with the Guernsey authorities.

Several French fishermen have been heavily fined for illegal fishing in the waters but this seems to have done little to deter them. One, who was fined last year, said on French television: "If they attempt to arrest me they'll have to sink me before I will go back to St Peter Port."

A milder taste of happiness.

Hamlet

SMOKING CAUSES HEART DISEASE
Chief Medical Officers' Warning

Home groans as Abbey sets the rate ball rolling

Clifford German

Mortgage rates are moving upwards across the board, with four lenders raising rates yesterday. They were led by Abbey National, which confirmed an increase in its standard mortgage rate for loans of less than £60,000 from 7.04 per cent to 7.29 per cent, effective immediately for existing borrowers and with effect from 18 December for new customers.

Abbey National's announcement follows moves by the Nationwide and Birmingham Midshires, which raised standard rates immediately after the increase in base rates last month. But the Nationwide,

the largest of the committed mutual societies, raised its rate from only 6.74 per cent to 6.99 per cent and was only catching up with the market.

Abbey National was already one of the cheaper lenders and its decision to increase rates for the first time in two years breaks new ground.

Officially the market leader, the Halifax Building Society, says it will wait until the next meeting of the Chancellor and the Governor of the Bank of England on 11 December, when they discuss base rates, before deciding whether to raise its rates, and by how much.

But the Abbey National's decision is already putting pres-

sure on the smaller societies. The Coventry Building Society yesterday increased its privilege rate for established borrowers to 6.50 per cent and its standard variable rate for new and recent borrowers to 7.25 per cent, both increases of 0.26 per cent effective from 1 January.

Some lenders are already anticipating a further rise in base rates from 6 per cent to 6.25 per cent next week. Northern Rock yesterday raised its privilege rate for established borrowers to 6.99 per cent and its standard rate to 7.49 per cent with effect from 1 January. Both rates are going up by 0.5 per cent.

Mortgage rates are being in-

creased to pay for increased payments to savers. But lenders are deferring a decision on how much more to offer savers.

The Abbey National expects to announce new savings rates this week but has already said increases will range from 0.05 per cent to 0.25 per cent. Coventry Building Society will review rates for savers later this month and Northern Rock will announce new savings rates on 13 December.

Demand for fixed rate mortgages has tripled in the past month, and many of the more attractive offers are being withdrawn. Bristol & West withdrew its cut-price rate of 4.74 per cent fixed for two years last week.

news

Independent's story over first Aids victim proved right

Charles Arthur
Science Editor

Independent experts have cast serious doubt on suggestions that pure accident caused the results which led a team of Manchester researchers to mistakenly claim that the world's first Aids victim died in 1959.

Following an investigation by *The Independent*, which first revealed doubts about the research, the experts - who include an Oxford professor - say

there is only a 3 per cent chance the faulty tests which led to the claims arose through bad luck.

In 1990, a team of scientists at Manchester University found HIV, the virus that causes Aids, during retrospective analysis of tissue samples from David Carr, a 25-year-old apprentice printer who died of a mysterious illness in 1959. None were found in "control" samples from another person who died at the same time.

This led them to make the world-famous claim in the medical

World's first Aids case was false

How *The Independent* reported the story in March 1995

ical journal, *The Lancet*, that July that Mr Carr was the "world's first confirmed case of Aids". Based on this, a number of scientists theorised that Aids

was an ancient disease, rather than a new one which had arisen in the past few decades. But the Manchester claim was subsequently exploded by

The Independent, which revealed in March 1995 that American researchers had determined that the strain of HIV found in the tissues evolved too recently to have existed in 1959. In January, Andrew Bailey and Gerald Corbett, two of the three scientists who submitted the paper, wrote to *The Lancet* to admit "we can find no evidence ... to suggest that the 1959 Manchester patient carried [HIV]".

Edward Hooper, a medical researcher, and Professor William Hamilton, a geneticist at Oxford University, suggest two possible causes. The error which led to HIV being found only in Mr Carr's samples could either have occurred before the samples were sent to the laboratory where they were analysed, or by a mistake in breaking the "double blind" coding (which prevented them knowing whether the sample came from Mr Carr or a "control").

Few alternative scenarios appear feasible. Contamination of samples from Mr Carr by an HIV-infected knife would only be explicable if "the knife supposedly wiped itself clean" on the control samples, they say. But Professor Hamilton said: "The fact that there are at least three human genotypes involved suggests it cannot have been a simple contamination." The third author, Dr George Williams, the Manchester University pathologist who conducted the post-mortem on Mr Carr has repeatedly denied this. "I'm utterly, absolutely confident of the authenticity of that material," he told *The Inde-*



David Carr: Not Aids victim

Open road beckons for bigger lorries

Michael Streeter

Environmentalists yesterday attacked as "simplistic" government plans which could herald the use of heavier lorries on Britain's road network.

If made law, they would allow hauliers to drive lorries as heavy as 44 tonnes - six tonnes more than the present limit - before the turn of the century.

A Department of Transport consultation document proposes allowing lorries of up to 40 tonnes for general use in line with European law and 44 tonnes for so-called "piggy-back" joint road/rail operations.

At present, these heaviest lorries are only allowed for specific journeys involving containers to and from rail routes.

Most controversially, the proposals seek comments on the idea of allowing 44-tonne lorries for general use by January 1999, or alternatively 2001.

The Roads minister, John Watts, indicated his support yesterday by claiming that the use of the higher-weight lorries on six axes was more "road friendly" than using 40-tonne vehicles on just five axes. "They would also be no noisier and have the same stopping distance as 38-tonne vehicles."

The theory used by department officials and the road freight lobby is that heavier lorries, which can carry more goods, could reduce the total number of vehicles on the road by 6,500. Mr Watts also stressed that heavier lorries did not mean bigger lorries.

However, Lynn Sloman, assistant director of the lobby group Transport 2000 dismissed the Government's arguments as "atrocity simplicities".

She said the net effect of allowing the larger tonnage would be to increase the overall use of roads to carry heavy freight as

firms found it more cost efficient than the rail network. "If the Government allows heavier lorries it will be giving a direct subsidy to road haulage, which will be used to add to lorry mileage by centralising distribution still further."

After the last increase in lorry weights to 38 tonnes in 1983, lorry mileage had gone up by 30 per cent and freight mileage risen by more than 40 per cent, she said.

Critics claim that apart from their environmental impact, lorries are proportionately eight times more likely to be involved in a fatal accident than cars.

The Freight Transport Association yesterday gave a mixed reaction to news of the consultation. A spokesman, Adam Wurf, said: "We are pleased that this issue is back on the agenda again."

The organisation believes that collectively, 44-tonne vehicles would save more than 300 million litres of fuel a year and would reduce congestion. They would also save the freight industry about £300m a year - a drop of nearly 8 per cent on the cost of operating the present heaviest vehicles.

However, Mr Wurf said they were dismayed that the plans were only at consultation level, with no clear sign of when they would be implemented, at a time when the industry needed to be able to plan for the future.

Mr Watts said yesterday it was "possible" that once the consultation was completed in the New Year, laws could come in before the general election. But critics fear that ministers are trying to avoid antagonising either the road or the environmental lobbies by making capital out of consulting now, but delaying any unpopular decision until after the poll.



Shelf life: Brian Lang, the chief executive of the British Library, at the St Pancras building yesterday

Photograph: Andrew Buurman

Poetry in motion heralds the new British Library

Marianne Macdonald
Arts Correspondent

The British Library took delivery of the first of 12 million books and journals for its new St Pancras building yesterday in what has been dubbed the biggest book move in history.

Fourteen years after construction work started at its new London headquarters, the first volume to be ceremonially placed on its 186 miles of shelving was *The Oxford Book of English Traditional Verse*. The collection to be moved totals almost 40 million patents, eight million stamps, two million maps and more than 1 million sound recordings.

It will take more than 275,000 people-hours - equivalent to more than three working lifetimes - and 5,600 van loads to move them. The saga of the construction of the new building reached Kafkaesque proportions recently when it emerged it had cost £511m, three times initial estimates, and would be completed nine years later than expected due to contractual disputes and faulty workmanship.

The Prince of Wales unkindly described the building as "a dim collection of sheds groping for some symbolic significance", while the Heritage Select Committee thought it more like "a Babylonian ziggurat seen through a fun-fair distorting mirror".

But yesterday the playwright Harold Pinter was kinder. He said it was "wonderful", and his wife, the historian Lady Antonia Fraser, applauded "a great national monument". The building opens fully in June 1999, 21 years after it was approved by the Callaghan government.

Outrage as police cleared over asylum-seeker's death

Jason Bennetto
Crime Correspondent

The police will not face disciplinary action over the death of a Nigerian asylum-seeker declared by an inquest jury to have been unlawfully killed during a struggle with two police officers, it was announced yesterday.

Shiji Lapite, 34, died of asphyxiation after being held in a

neck-hold by plain-clothes police officers in north London in December 1994.

The decision by the Police Complaints Authority was condemned by Mr Lapite's family and campaigners who are to seek a judicial review into the decision earlier this year by the Crown Prosecution Service not to prosecute the officers. There was also criticism of the

complaints procedure for allowing police officers to investigate themselves.

An inquest in January ruled that Mr Lapite was killed unlawfully after one constable admitted kicking him in the head. Mr Lapite was arrested on suspicion of possession of crack cocaine. The jury heard that one pathologist had counted 45 separate injuries on the body of the

deceased, compared with "superficial" injuries sustained by the officers.

Mr Lapite later collapsed in a police van and was driven straight to hospital, where he was pronounced dead half-an-hour after being arrested.

A post-mortem examination revealed that Mr Lapite had been drinking and had also taken cocaine, which may have

anaesthetised him and caused him to struggle more aggressively.

The PCA, which oversaw the inquiry, said no disciplinary action would be taken against the officers involved, although Molly Meacher, of the PCA, urged the Metropolitan Police to ensure that officers understood the risks of restraining neck-holds. The PCA has repeated-

ly stressed the danger of using neckholds, which have been responsible for a number of deaths. Scotland Yard has now agreed to carry out extra training.

Ms Meacher said the PCA had based its decision on advice from an independent barrister and testimony of two witnesses who said they saw no officer using "unreasonable force".

Mr Lapite's widow, Olamide, said: "I have lost my husband and my children have lost their father but the authorities have failed to bring to justice those responsible for the death."

Piara Power, of the Newham Monitoring Project, a pressure group, said: "How can the unanimous verdict of a jury and widespread public concern over the whole issue of deaths in cus-

tody be so contemptuously brushed aside in this way? This episode serves to bring the entire criminal justice system into disrepute."

Deborah Coles, co-director of Inquest, the support and advice group, said: "It makes a mockery of any idea that the PCA has any other function than protecting police officers from being brought to account."

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news

Cash lottery over fertility treatment

Glenda Cooper

National Health Service funding of fertility treatment is "chaotic, patchy" and amounts to "treatment by postcode" according to new research.

Despite an increase in the number of health authorities offering treatment on the NHS, a couple in Scotland wanting *in vitro* fertilisation (IVF) are seven times more likely to be successful than a couple in the South and West region, while partners in Northern Ireland have no access at all to NHS funds.

One in six couples experience difficulty in conceiving at some point in their lives, with the largest number of fertility problems unexplained. For those who choose IVF the live birth success rate is 14.1 per cent per cycle.

The report, commissioned by the National Infertility Awareness Campaign (Niac), found that the number of health authorities that formally purchase infertility services has increased from 21 per cent in 1993 to its current level of 65 per cent, an increase Niac thinks is partly due to the reorganisation of health authorities last April.

But the divide between those authorities funding increasing

levels of fertility treatment and those that fund little or no treatment has increased. While the proportion of health authorities funding more than 20 cycles of IVF per 100,000 population has almost doubled, the proportion of those refusing to fund any form of assisted conception has not changed.

The majority of authorities reported no change in funding since last year although one in five reported an increase. Despite an increase of 15 per cent in IVF rates to 9.3 treatment cycles per 100,000 population in

1996, as opposed to 8.1 treatment cycles per 100,000 in 1995, the rates of IVF treatment are still well below the recommendations stated in a 1992 report of 40 IVF treatments.

The most generous region listed in the latest report was Scotland, with 29.3 IVF treatments per 100,000, followed by the North West which funds 15.9. Only four regions funded more than 10 cycles per 100,000 population. The lowest rates were found in the West Midlands (5.2), South and West (4.2) and in Northern Ireland (0).

Eligibility criteria have become more uniform among health authorities, with the majority specifying a maximum age for the woman of between 35 and 40. Some authorities still only fund treatment for people who have lived within the authority's area for a specified period.

Clare Brown, chair of Niac, said: "The great divide between the health authorities is worrying. Although we are pleased that some health authorities are increasing the amount they already spend in infertility services, we are extremely saddened that there are many health authorities who refuse to fund treatment."

"We are still having to deal with a chaotic, patchy 'treatment by postcode' method of deciding who can and who cannot have their infertility treated by the NHS."

"This is obviously totally unfair, unacceptable and a desperately unhappy situation for the couples this affects."

Susan Rice, chief executive of the national fertility association, Issue, described the situation as "abhorrent". She said: "Issue calls on health providers to stop this 'trade in babies' and consider the detrimental effect infertility has on all areas of people's lives."



Test tubes containing frozen embryos Photograph: Reuters

Insurance firms to fight pupils' claims against failing schools

Judith Judd
Education Editor

Insurance companies which represent education authorities say they will fight claims for damages against failing schools through the courts.

Zurich Municipal, which insures most councils, said it had no intention of settling out of court as happened recently in the case of a man awarded £30,000 for bullying at school. Insurers believe they could win cases against pupils suing schools for bad exam results.

Two teenagers are preparing cases against schools failed by the Office for Standards in Education. They say the schools

are to blame for their poor GCSE results.

Royal Sun Alliance, the insurance company involved in the bullying case at Shene School in Richmond, wanted an out-of-court settlement because it said it would not recover its costs even if the school won the case. The plaintiff was financing the case through legal aid.

A spokesman for Zurich Municipal said: "We think this case is defensible and would definitely defend it."

"We don't think giving in to a claim such as this, which has a very weak foundation in law, would be cheaper. If we did not fight and win a case, we should certainly open the floodgates."

Lawyers agreed it would be very difficult for pupils to win. Julian Gizzi, head of the education law department of City solicitors Beachcroft Stanleys said legal aid should not be granted in such cases, at least where they were unlikely to succeed.

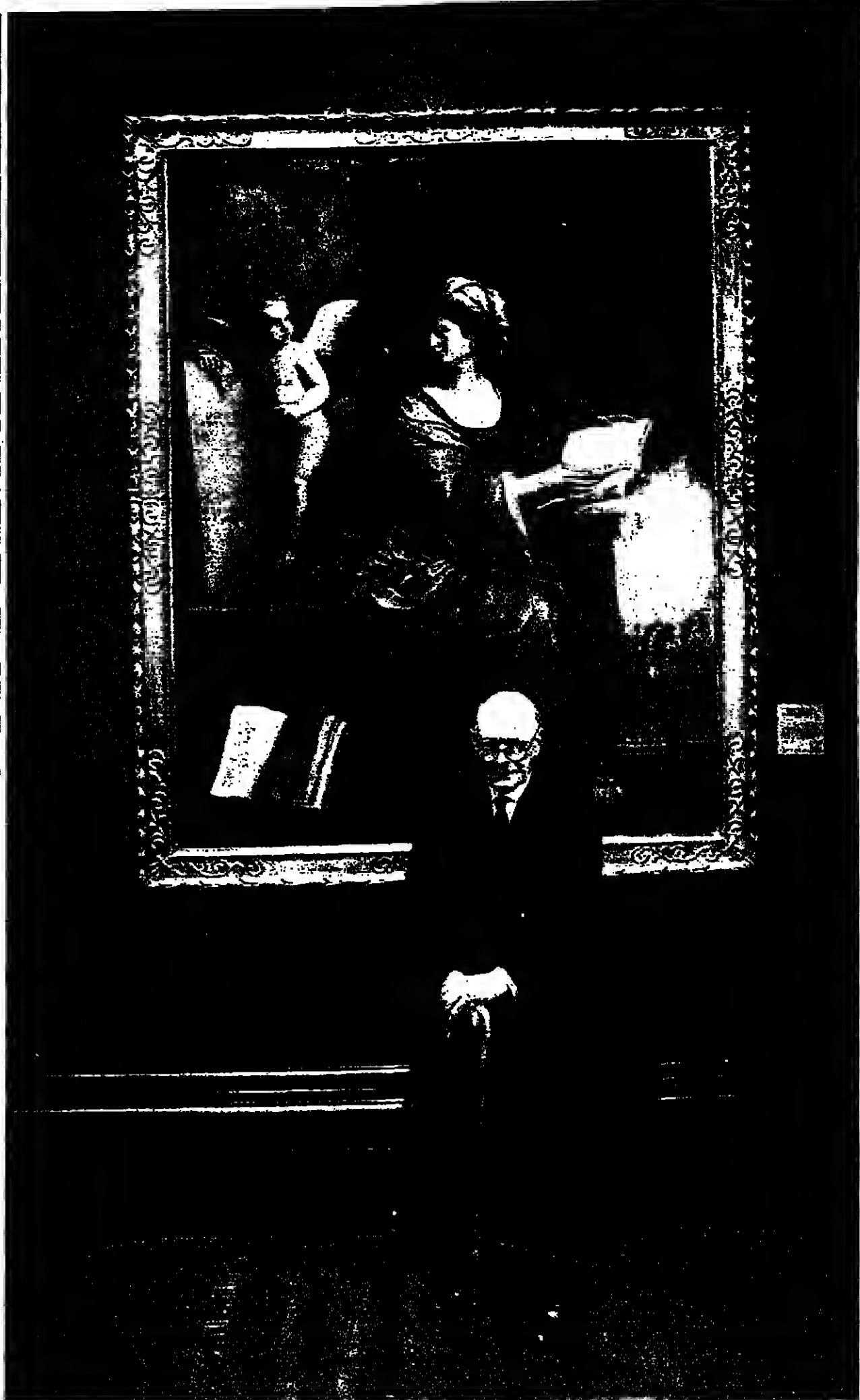
"Such cases look set to continue and grow in number, diverting more and more resources away from education and towards lawyers' fees. For the school to defend this action all the way to trial could easily cost as much as two or three times a teacher's salary."

Labour urged the Government to close any legal loophole which might encourage pupils

to make claims against failing schools.

David Blunkett, the shadow Secretary of State for Education and Employment, told BBC Radio 4's *World at One*: "I can't see how we can go into a situation where there is a threat hanging over legitimate inspection, where revealing that something is wrong is used in terms of legal action and where money is then withdrawn from a school that needs it."

The Legal Aid Board said the pupils involved in the case had not applied for legal aid. In all cases, the board considered the legal merits of the claim to see whether there were reasonable prospects of success.

In his gift: Sir Denis Mahon with Barbiere's *The Cumaean Sybil with a Putto*

Photograph: John Voos

Millionaire's gift horse puts politics into museums world

David Lister
Arts News Editor

A defiant political gesture by an 86-year-old millionaire art collector could change for ever the way works of art are left to the nation.

The £25m bequest by Sir Denis Mahon of 61 17th century Italian baroque pictures to institutions including the National Gallery and the Ashmolean and Fitzwilliam museums, in Oxford and Cambridge, will be withdrawn, before his death, he states, if the Government falls short in its commitment to public collections generally.

It will be removed from galleries after his death if any gallery involved sells off any of its works of art.

Until now private collectors have left pictures in their wills to their favourite galleries with no motives other than enriching the national heritage and possibly helping their descendants by declaring the paintings against inheritance tax.

Sir Denis, long a campaigner for the arts, and a bachelor, has also intimated, though it is not in the legal agreement he has with the National Art Col-

lections Fund, that he would not want any of his pictures in a gallery or museum that charges the public for admission.

The latter has never been higher on the agenda than now following cuts announced last week in government grant to museums and galleries.

Sir Denis, independently wealthy as a member of the Guinness Mahon banking family, is well placed to hold governments to ransom. If a government reduces funding too much he will, as it were, from the grave reduce the number of paintings he has bequeathed to the nation. For that purpose he has again gone against convention and ensured that legal control of the bequest stays with the National Art Collections Fund, the leading independent art charity, rather than the museums and galleries involved.

As Sir Denis threatened at a press conference at the National Gallery yesterday with a phrase that will resound through the art world and the Department of National Heritage for years to come: "In the last analysis a cut on one side could be matched by a cut on the other."

The new era of the politically

charged bequest was welcomed by Mark Fisher, Labour's arts spokesman. "I'm very sympathetic," he said. "The spirit of all the major historic bequests has been of benefiting the public. Sir Denis is continuing that tradition. He wants to leave his collection to the public and to ensure that museums remain truly public."

The National Gallery's director, Neil MacGregor, added: "What is interesting is that here is a man with a very clear view of how museums should relate to the public, and I applaud it."

Others were uneasy. Tim Mason, director of the Museums and Galleries Commission, said "Bequests have often come with conditions, but they are straightforward conditions concerning things like security, the environment in which paintings are displayed and access. Such things are easily measured. The difficulty here is interpretation. How does one measure whether the Government is falling short of its commitments?"

Other senior museum figures said that a less important collection would be unlikely to be accepted on such terms.

The Government will also be

watching to see whether Sir Denis really is holding a gun to his head or whether he is bluffing. The first signs are that Sir Denis's conditions may be as much political gesture as legal threat.

Yesterday he admitted that in last week's Budget the Government had indeed, through its cut to museums and galleries, fallen short on its commitments. But he said that although the Government had failed on this key condition, he would not be withdrawing his bequest yet.

"I shall just wait to see what Mrs Bottomley [Secretary of State for National Heritage] says for herself," he said. We will have to see whether the Government behaves in a civilised manner or not. I think they should have a chance to see what there is to lose."

The Irish National Gallery has been promised five of the paintings in the bequest. Raymond Keane, director of the Irish National Gallery, confirmed that more of the Mahon bequest may cross the Irish Sea if admission charges are levied at a British gallery to benefit. No Dublin public gallery or museum charges for entry.

Women lose their seat on the board

Barrie Clement
Labour Editor

The proportion of female directors in companies which are members of the anti-discrimination campaign Opportunity 2000 has slumped by nearly one-third, it was disclosed yesterday.

A year ago, women accounted for 16 per cent of board members at the 300 organisations which belong to the campaign designed to increase the number of females in managerial posts. Yesterday, the organisation conceded that the latest figure was

11 per cent. Celebrating the fifth anniversary of Opportunity 2000, Lady Elspeth Howe, its chairman, conceded that the total number of women in such positions was so low that even one departure could make a significant impact on the percentage.

Peter Davis, group chief executive of the Prudential Corporation, a prominent member of the group, said that while the figures seemed to show a decline it was "counter-intuitive" as far as his personal experience was concerned and that of others involved in the initiative.

While Lady Howe reported no major progress in the number of women in senior positions over the last 12 months, they had "held on" to previous gains. Some 31 per cent of all managers at Opportunity 2000 employers were women, 17 per cent of senior managers, 31 per cent of middle managers and 41 per cent of junior managers. This compared with 12.5 per cent of managers in the United Kingdom as a whole, the Institute of Management said. The percentage of female directors in Opportunity 2000

firms was 11 per cent compared with 3.3 per cent elsewhere.

Around 80 per cent of Britain's leading employers, with about one-quarter of the working population, are members of Opportunity 2000, officials said. They said there were notable absences, including BT, Hanson Group, BAT, GEC, Pearson and Mirror Group Newspapers. Some employers had left because of restructuring. A number of local authorities left because of public expenditure cuts.

Women and Work, a campaign pull-out in *The Independent*

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Aspects of union: Michael Forsyth, Duke of York and stone Photograph: PA

James Cusick

Michael Forsyth, Secretary of State for Scotland, is said to be overjoyed that his gesture of bringing home the Stone of Scone has somehow reminded the Scots of the historical importance of the Union. His opposite number, George Robertson, in the run-up to the general election, appears to want to concentrate his mind on matters more concrete.

After being humiliated in Labour's summer of U-turns on devolution for Scotland, Mr Robertson had the unenviable and difficult job of convincing the Scottish party, the media and the electorate that Tony Blair's apparent "I-know-best" explanation for the enforced changes would somehow be for the better. Coping with more turns than an ice skater, Labour has now committed itself to a referendum on devolution should it form the next government. The Scots will be

the party plan by stating simply: "It's mature. The Scots have basic common sense and will understand the difference between a power and a tax."

"Mature" is a rarely used adjective in politics. The attack Mr Robertson suffered at this year's Scottish National Party conference, where he was accused of being Scotland's answer to the wartime traitor Lord Haw-Haw by Alex Neil, one of the SNP's senior spokesmen, is a recent example of the immaturity of much Scottish political debate. The slur annoyed Mr Robertson, but he skillfully used it to his advantage: "If it had been a comment from someone in the lower ranks of the SNP it would have been quietly dismissed. But all it showed was that despite the SNP's claims to be an organised, controlled and effective party, this is the level they can reduce themselves to."

Elected MP for Hamilton in 1979, Mr Robertson was quickly identified as a potential senior figure in any future Labour government's foreign affairs team. One of the party's star performers in the drawn-out Maastricht debate, it may seem to the outsider that being reduced to spats with the likes of Mr Neil is an unwelcome downturn in a political career. And, unusually in politics, he admits he may now even be campaigning for a policy that will see his power reduced. A Scottish parliament would elect its own chief minister, thus reducing the governor-general powers currently enjoyed by the Secretary of State in St Andrew's House in Edinburgh. So will it be a diminished job? "No, it will be a different job. It will be a channel of communication between the devolved parliament and Westminster."

He doesn't accept that he really wants both jobs. "I can't envisage the same person doing both." So where then do his ambitions lie? The reply, if not quite Francis Urruhart is almost there. "In politics you are unwise to declare your ambitions."

His office is currently receiving numerous invitations from English universities asking him to go and explain what devolution will mean. The joke among some Old Labour hard-liners is that they would first like him to explain it to them. He may have had little room for manoeuvre in the chaos generated by Mr Blair's ordered changes in how devolution was to be implemented. Mr Robertson lost something, mostly his image of being honest.

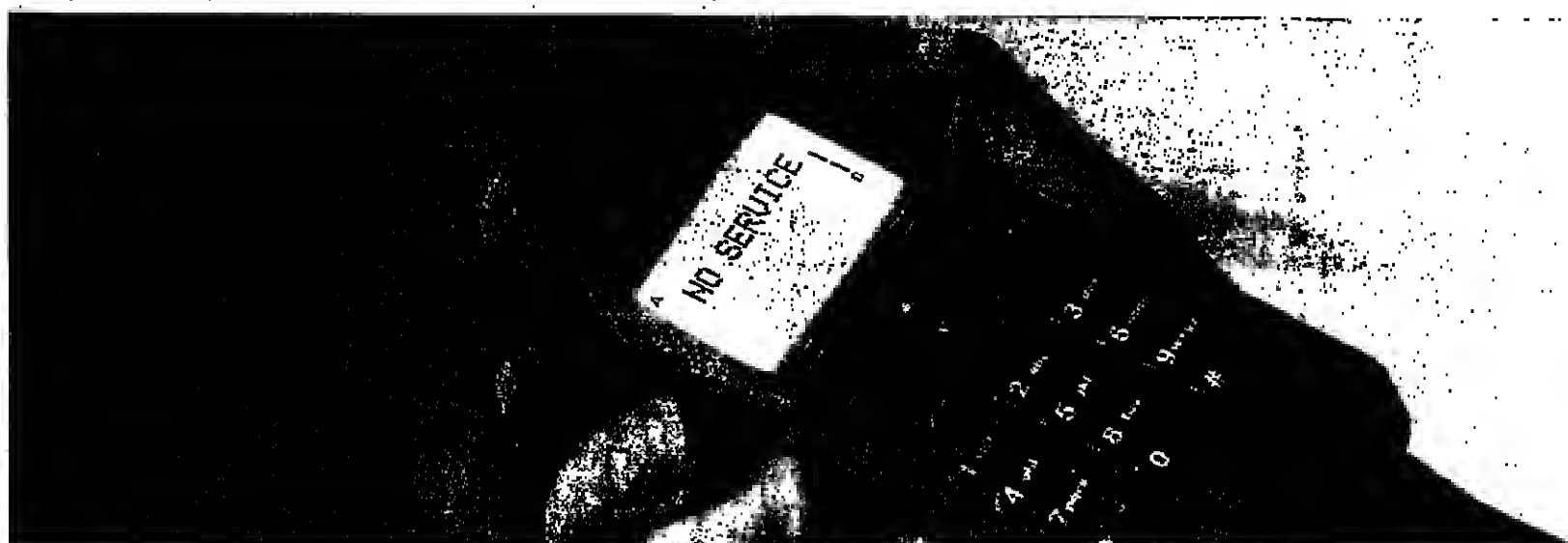
Some inside the Labour party in Scotland believe he is unlikely to recover fully. Others believe he will. But the end result is that like the evangelist that sometimes appears in overtone Mr Blair, an almost excessive fervour also grips Mr Robertson, who is 50, when he speaks of reinventing the Union, attracting a new generation to politics, and talks of

Scots romantic who would reinvent the power of the Union



Hidden hopes: George Robertson will not reveal his ambitions Photograph: David Rose

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His image suffered after Blair's changes. Some believe he can never fully recover

asked both if they want a devolved parliament and if that parliament should have tax-raising powers.

If Mr Forsyth now imagines himself as Sir Walter Scott, reincarnated and is intent on continually reinforcing the symbolic power of 300 years of union with England as the foundation of his election campaign. Mr Robertson is equally a touch romantic when he speaks of, perhaps predictably, "new Scotland, new Union".

Unlike many in his party, he says he now sees the referendum as "not an obstacle, but an opportunity".

With Labour seemingly committed to fighting hard for a yes vote, and anticipating a well-funded brutal campaign from the Conservatives for no, Mr Robertson curiously believes there is no hidden danger in the message he now says will be explained to the electorate in Labour's own campaign: it wants the power to tax but in effect will promise not to use it.

"The Scots will vote for it to be there, but the parliament itself will rarely use it," Mr Robertson says. He explains: "It's a power, not a tax. It's there if the people want it to be there."

Anticipating that such a campaigning tactic might be either open to accusations of unfairness (if you are being kind) or logical naivety (if you are being cruel?), Mr Robertson defends

DAILY POEM

Anselmo's Revolutionary Pamphlets

By Cliff Ashcroft

The ancient printer Anselmo Lorenzo carried the message from village to village and awakened me with a clear word. A word that pressed upon my open hands and fired a pure and supple flame.

I too dreamed of the el reparto, the re-distributed land, our fields returned like the warm acre of our village beds. And the landowner and priest fell from my memory like winter's evil cold.

Anselmo Lorenzo I think of you leading us from the certainty of punishment into the doubt of our free limbs. What was to become of us now we could do exactly as we wished?

I looked for your word in my frozen hands, but there will be no simple rest. All you have brought is empty dispute and the cinders I press to my closed palms like letters of broken type.

Cliff Ashcroft was born in 1963 and read English at Sheffield University. Carcanet publishes his first collection, *Faithful*, this month. His poems are simply constructed, often elegiac, and month. His poems are in place and history. The poet Penelope Shuttle has noted a "characteristic tone of reserved epiphanies, a stillness within process".

B&Q Environmental Update



Dr Alan Knight - B&Q's Quality & Environment Controller

Over six years ago, we put into place a planned programme to reduce the environmental impact of every product we sell.

This is our fourth annual update covering all the main areas of environmental activity during the past year and describing our plans for the future.

Timber & Forests

In 1991 we set two targets:
By the end of 1993: to have identified all the sources of our timber products down to forest level - achieved for over 98% (by volume).

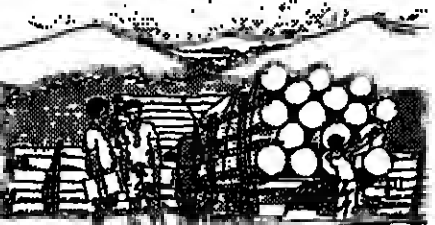
By the end of 1995: all our timber products to come from well managed forests - only 1.5% of timber by volume failed.

Collecting and evaluating the data has been an intensive exercise involving one person working full time for over four years.

Independent Forest Certification - the best way forward

How can we be sure that timber is from well managed forests?

Until now evaluation of timber sources was dependent on 'internal scrutiny' - desk top studies and occasional visits to forests. The weaknesses are obvious, but it was all we had. But not anymore: we, like many other organisations, realised



back in 1990 that a more robust and credible system was needed. Forests must be independently certified. By working together B&Q and many other companies and environmental groups created The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC).

The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)



© 1996 Forest Stewardship Council Ltd. 336/058

The role of the FSC is to set the principles of good forest management and ensure that certification across the world operates to the same standard. We believe it currently represents the only credible system capable of operating globally.

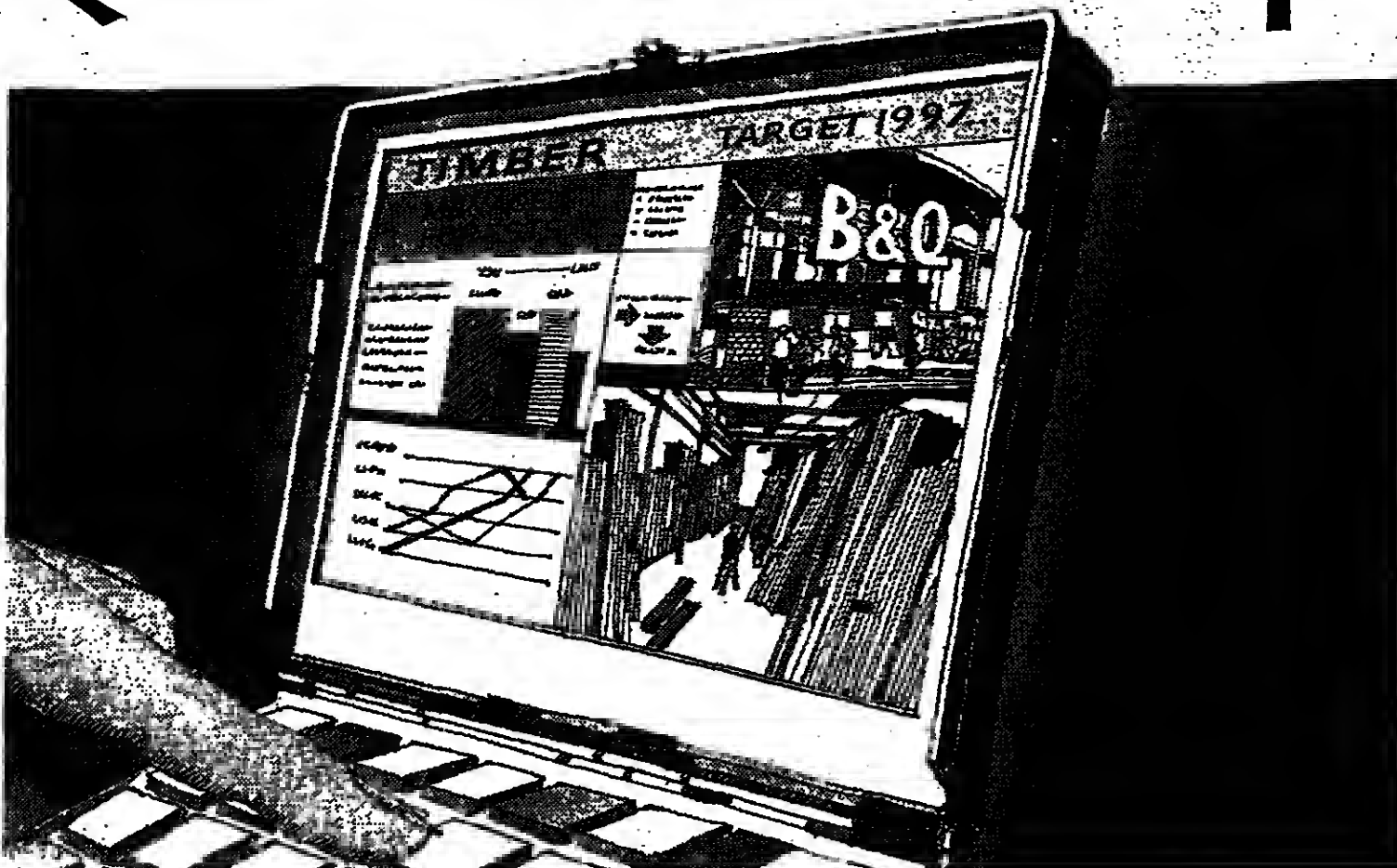
Customers are just beginning to see the FSC trademark on timber products in our stores and as these become more widely available we hope marketing campaigns from other retailers (including competitors) and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) will help customers recognise and buy these products in favour of non-certified products.

Products available at B&Q which have already been independently certified:

PRODUCT	SUPPLIER	COUNTRY
Exterior Doors	Chindwell	Malaysia
Charcoal	Charan Aldred, Rectella	South Africa
Interior Doors	Premium Timber	Poland
Edge Laminated Pine Boards	Premium Timber	Poland
Cabinet Doors	Premium Timber	Poland
Wooden Door Furniture	Douglas Kane	Poland
Parquet Flooring	Western Cork	Zimbabwe

Certification initiatives are also underway in other countries such as Ivory Coast, Ghana, Sri Lanka, UK and Sweden.

Some producers have genuine forest management problems and real practical problems to overcome. Others are simply reluctant to support the concept of certification. We shall continue to explain to them why we believe it is important but if they are not convinced we will have to buy from elsewhere.



Target - By the end of 1999 the only wood we buy will be from independently certified forests.

Paint

One in three pots of paint sold in the UK for domestic use is bought from a B&Q store. We believe that between 0.6% and 2% of all solvent emissions in the UK could be from paint bought at B&Q.

The figure is large enough for B&Q alone to make an impact on the overall reduction of solvents. Solvents contribute to low level smog, climate change and can aggravate asthma. They also have an unpleasant smell. The future can be solvent free and where technically impossible, low solvent paints are the answer.

The first stage is already underway. We are working with our suppliers to ensure there is a clear and precise message on every single can of paint we sell. At the moment, this is not the case.

From a total of 123 products there was the following confusing array of labels:

Claim Type	Claim	No of products
ODOUR	Low odour	66
	Low in odour	3
	Lower odour	5
	Lower odour formula	5
	Less odour than conventional gloss paints	2
	Much less odour than ordinary emulsion	2
	Low aromatic solvents reduces odour	2
	No unpleasant odour	2
	TOTAL	87
WATER-BASED	Waterbased	40
	Economical waterborne	1
	Waterborne copolymer emulsion	1
	Waterbased acrylic	1
LOW SOLVENT	Solvent free	6
	Free from solvents	4
	Solvent free waterbased formula	2
	Low solvent	5
	Low solvent formula	1
	Very little organic solvent	1
	Solvent based, the use of water based alternatives should be considered	1
	TOTAL	26
OZONE	Ozone friendly	6
	Contains no fluorocarbons	3
	Contains no CFCs	4
	TOTAL	13
LEAD	No lead added	10
	No added lead	7
	Contains no lead	1
	Contains no lead additives	1
PLANTS & ANIMALS	Harmonious to plants	5
	Harmonious to animals	1
	Harmonious to plants and animals	1
	Harmonious to plants and pets	2
	Plant and animal safe	1
	Harmonious to plants when dry	2
	Harmonious to plants and pets when dry	1
	TOTAL	15
RECYCLING (packaging)	25% recycled steel	12
	Recyclable	13
OTHER	Environmentally Friendly	1
	Lower environmental impact in manufacture	2
	Official Sponsor WWF	7
	TOTAL	10

When we finalise our policy at the end of the year we will start phasing out claims such as 'environmentally friendly'. We have also worked with suppliers to agree a standard format for displaying the solvent content of all products.

Proposed Target - End of 1999: to reduce solvent emissions from B&Q paint by 30% (using 1996 figures as baseline).

As part of this process we will start introducing new products with a lower solvent content.

Target - December 1996: to finalise details of policy.

Target - End of June 1997: to have new labelling system in place.

Target - July 1997: to launch customer communication programme.

Charcoal

All our imported lumpwood charcoal is currently certified and next year all our new stock of briquettes and barbecue kits will be certified.

Charcoal production can help our forests in the UK. By working with the Bio

Regional Development Group, it has been possible to sell charcoal from coppiced woodlands in the nearest B&Q stores.

Last season local charcoal was on sale in 120 stores.

Target - by summer 1997: to buy locally produced charcoal for virtually all stores.

Target - by the end of 1997: to have 50% of UK sources of charcoal independently certified.

Working Conditions in Developing Countries

Working conditions in developing countries is a difficult and emotional issue. The most publicised example is the abuse of child or bonded labour. However, we believe the issue is more complex than just child labour. We have seen factories where as well as environment controls, health and safety can also be improved.

We have worked with suppliers to introduce basic health and safety measures in their door mat, rug and brassware factories in India. We visit factories and if required request improvements. The scale and complexity of our supply base makes this a huge initiative.

By the end of 1996 we plan to finalise a method of audit and random follow up visits using local specialists for our entire Indian supply base. This will be used as a trial for similar initiatives across the world.

It will be several years before we are satisfied with the working conditions in our factories. However, we firmly believe working with our suppliers is the only way forward and is preferable to bans or boycotts which result in more hardship for the workers.

PVC

PVC has long been associated, rightly or wrongly, with dioxin contamination during PVC production and waste incineration. Also many PVC products contain phthalates. This chemical has been connected with the decline in fertility rates and the feminisation of some animal species. Some environmental campaigners are trying to persuade businesses to phase out PVC altogether. The industry has responded by focusing on the benefits of PVC and questioning the validity of the scientific theories. The issue facing B&Q is that both points of view have merit.

The science is ambiguous and there is as yet no consensus as to the true extent of the problem or to the solution. We will not take sides - but we want to do what is right for the environment.

We shall be financing a PhD student to work on this issue for three years to focus on reviewing the literature and relating it specifically to the B&Q product range. Chemical analyses will be undertaken as and when necessary. We will act on the research findings as soon as key facts are identified.

What of the other issues?

Supplier Assessment

There are so many issues for B&Q to resolve, we cannot resolve them all alone. We must get all our suppliers involved. Since 1991, it has been company policy for all our 600 suppliers to have an environmental policy, backed up by an action plan. By the middle of 1994, over 95% of our suppliers had a policy - an improvement of 85% since 1991.

Building on that progress in July 1995 B&Q launched a supplier assessment programme called QUEST which included both quality and environmental performance. QUEST, which stands for the Quality, Ethics, Safety & Treatment of products, measures suppliers on ten key quality or environmental principles.

The extensive amount of information which needs to be processed has caused bottlenecks, but despite this we know that QUEST is the correct approach. Any suppliers not meeting a certain grade will not have any new products listed until they have addressed the problem concerned. Continued inaction will result in a company being de-listed. Of our existing suppliers, 30% have been reassessed and the average grades for the five environmental principles are:-

QUEST 6

Average grade: 3.4
Environmental Policy and Awareness
Suppliers' understanding of the environmental issues associated with their products and their commitment to resolving them is graded by assessing the suppliers' published environmental policy.

QUEST 7

Average grade: 3.2
Environmental Action and Achievements
To ensure that a supplier's environmental achievement does not consist of only writing a good policy, suppliers' achievements are awarded a separate grade for action.

QUEST 8

Average grade: 2.5
International Supply Chains
B&Q believes that the issue of poor working conditions in factories in developing countries are a significant issue for retailers. Therefore suppliers' understanding and commitment to this issue is awarded a separate grade.

QUEST 9

Average grade: 3.9
Packaging and Environmental Claims
The suppliers' ability to meet all the possible future legal requirements to minimise the amount of packaging used and design for recycling is jointly assessed with the accuracy and benefits or problems caused by any environmental claims on a product.

QUEST 10

Average grade: 3.5
Timber
The suppliers' ability to meet B&Q's present and future requirements of its timber policy and targets.

This is based on selling Grade A = 5, Grade B = 4, Grade C = 3, Grade D = 2, Grade E = 1 and 992 suppliers as of 18/1/96.

B&Q Store Performance - Waste Management & Local Agenda 21

We have the potential to make vast improvements in our own performance in terms of reducing our waste, recycling unused materials and working with the local community. This not only helps the environment but also saves us a small fortune!

Our Huddersfield store has formed a partnership with Kirklees Metropolitan Council addressing waste and energy management, staff awareness, customer communication plus community projects.

The store's waste minimisation initiative has involved donations of waste items to local schools and the staff together with Kirklees Metropolitan Council have cleaned up the stretch of the River Colne adjacent to the store.



The intention is to use this example as a case study to encourage other stores to become involved with their local authority's Local Agenda 21 programme. Agenda 21 is a global environmental action plan signed by the Government at the Earth Summit in 1992. All local councils are responsible for delivering improvements such as waste minimisation, energy efficiency and environmental enhancement.

QUEST for stores

In October we started to trial a new procedure for assessing the environmental performance of stores. This is based on QUEST for suppliers. There are 10 principles on which stores are graded.

1	Staff Awareness
2	Waste Legislation
3	Zero Waste
4	Litter Control
5	Customer Recycling Facilities
6	Energy Management
7	Customer Communication
8	Environmental and Community Interaction
9	Environmental Awareness of the Management Team
10	Enthusiasm of the Environmental Officer and Support from the Management Team

Forty stores are taking part in the pilot but it is intended to be available for all our stores by the middle of next year.

The more problems we solve, the more we find to solve

This is a summary of our actions. The complexity of the issues is immense and we know there is more we can do.

If you would like more detailed information, please fill in the coupon by ticking the relevant boxes and send it with a stamped addressed envelope (at least 21cm x 22cm) to: Dr. Alan Knight, B&Q plc, 1 Hampshire Corporate Park, Chandlers Ford, Eastleigh, Hants, SO53 3YX.

☐ How Green Is My Front Door?
(120 page environment review)
July 95, 75p SAE

☐ Timber Update
(poster)
February 96, 25p SAE

Information on B&Q's environmental programme can also be found on our site on the internet. The address is <http://www.diy.co.uk>

B&Q

Reporting on our impact on the environment.

صكنا من الال

French drivers face the sack

Judging by the fast-paced expansion of the Big Mac in Peking over the past year, the company seems to have used leverage from the Wang-fujing situation to secure the swift opening of other premises. The number of McDonald's restaurants in Peking has jumped from six when the removal notice was mooted in 1994, to 29 by the end of this year. There are more than 100 branches of McDonald's in China.

The unions have chosen to "forget" that their call for higher pay was reduced to acceptance of a one-off "bonus" of 3,000 francs (£355), and that any working hours decree is unlikely to go beyond the EU directive on a maximum 48-hour working week.

A violent crackdown on the opposition would destroy the progress Mr. Milosevic had made since 1993 in changing his image abroad from that of bellicose nationalist to supporter of peace in Croatia and Bosnia. Violence would almost certainly rule out the removal of the so-called "outer wall" of international



Both men now say they want to follow the example of countries such as Poland and Hungary since 1989 and transform Serbia into a free-market democracy. Mr Djindjic says he supports political pluralism and

Even if the opposition fails to topple Mr Milosevic, its leaders believe they have inflicted irreparable damage on his image. "We have torn off his mask ... to show him as he really is - a small-time Balkan dictator," Mr Djindjic said.

Petru Lucinschi, who was once a leading communist official in the Kremlin, was elected president of Moldova after beating the former Soviet republic's first post-independence leader, President Mircea Snegur, in a run-off vote on Sunday.

Reuters - Chisinau

Uganda admits shelling the Zairean town of Kasindi which it says was occupied by rebels opposed to the Ugandan President, Yoweri Museveni. But it denies having crossed the border and occupied part of Zaire. Zaire says it will counter-attack, though how it proposes to tackle the well-trained Ugandan army, having failed to suppress an uprising in its own back yard, is unclear. The Zairean government has repeatedly voiced its opposition to plans for the deployment of a foreign intervention force in its eastern region, having lost control over it more than a month ago.

The intervention force has so far been unable to get convoys of food and medical aid to the refugees. Taking their cue from their Rwandan backers, the Zairean rebels say they will only allow a handful of multinational military personnel into the territory they control. The rebels fear that the presence of such a force could neutralise the amazing gains they continue to make against the FAZ and allied Rwandan Hutu militias.

The Canadian-led force has been considering airdrops of food to the refugees in eastern Zaire. So far, however, it has only been able to deliver a small consignment of aid to Tanzania. Refugee camps there have recently swelled with an influx of Zaireans and Burundian Hutus fleeing eastern Zaire.

Fighting in Burundi has flared up again in recent days, with Hutu rebels reporting attacks on Tutsi-led army positions in five regions.



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INDEX



Grim spectacle: Onlookers viewing the wreckage of a train coach destroyed by a bomb at Ambala station in Punjab yesterday. At least 12 passengers were killed and 37 injured in the blast, which police say marks an upsurge in separatist violence in the region. Photograph: Reuters

Newswoman of courage cuts through the lies

Algiers — Salima Ghezali dipped her slice of cake-like bread into the dish of "meshoui", a thick paste of tomato, peppers and onions which the waiter had brought to our table with a flourish when Algeria's only female newspaper editor walked into his restaurant. She spoke quickly and quietly but with immense eloquence and courage. Journalists here are a dying breed — 69 have so far been shot, had their throats cut or been tortured to death — but Ms Ghezali could not be more alive, her words as sharp as razor blades, her humour as cutting as a knife.

Was she afraid, we ask? She nods at us brightly. "Almost all the time. Some days I forget to be afraid. Today? I was afraid

INSIDE ALGERIA

all last night but this morning I woke up and the weather was beautiful and everything was OK. Sometimes I try to convince myself that I'm a good Muslim so that I somehow get divine protection. It's very irrational, the way we build our psychological hopes. Sometimes there are days I phone my daughters or friends and we decide to say a prayer at the same time in the evening to create a kind of 'wave'. It's a game that's both serious and non-serious. It's completely irrational to create rites of this type — to prevent us saying to ourselves 'it comes when it comes'."

It — sudden and frightful death — gets banished to the edge of our conversation as Ms Ghezali, editor of the 60,000 circulation weekly *La Nation*, studies the menu of cheese pastries and traditional Algerian *brigue a l'oeuf* pizzas. "I always have trouble deciding what to eat," she says suddenly. "The problem of making decisions begins when you are raised in a country where you have no choice about anything. My friends have the same problem — they have made political decisions but when faced with choices, they can't do anything!"

Ms Ghezali laughs at her own joke, a shake of the head turning the long red hair on her shoulders. A divorced mother of two, she was a schoolteacher in the wild Mitidja hills before turning to journalism. She has been editor in chief of her liberal paper for two years. "Promotion comes earlier in wartime than in peacetime," she observes gently.

"There are a lot of young people who could be good journalists in Algeria but they don't have the right training. They don't lie on purpose. But in a country like this, information is held exclusively by the authorities — and this gives them an extreme margin of manipulation that enables them to control the journalists and makes them lie sincerely. A lot of journalists here are honest, respectable people but when they are told, for example, that a man has been killed by the Islamic Armed Group — the GIA — the journalists have no means to check, so they go ahead and say what they're told."

In the afternoon sunlight, Ms Ghezali's face clouds over. "There are terrible means of placing psychological control on journalists here," she says. "At the beginning of the attacks on

journalists and intellectuals, the security services provided them with video-cassettes which showed terrorists torturing and assassinating people, cutting their throats. I know these cassettes exist but I don't know where they are."

"The security authorities claim that the terrorists made these cassettes to show their violence. But you can also see how it's an excellent way for the authorities to impress the people who are the conduit for information — that is, the journalists. I have spoken to some who have seen these cassettes — and after that, when you say the word 'political dialogue', they think you are a monster."

Talking to Ms Ghezali is both an inspiring and deeply depressing. Inspiring because of her bravery, depressing because there are too many Salima Ghezalis in Algeria.

The winner of three international press awards, including the International Press Club's prize awarded to her in Spain in July this year, her paper was temporarily closed by the government a year ago. "We told our readers that the circumstances for holding the presidential elections [which gave the presidency to General Liamine Zeroual] were not right. We said nothing would change. So they shut us down for two weeks. Unfortunately, we were right."

Last March, the government closed *La Nation* again, this time for an article on Algerian human-rights violations. "The whole issue was seized. Two weeks later, we were banned again because of an article about the 'self-defence' militias, even though Amnesty International had said the same thing. The only news that the regime lets through is news that's to its favour. We can get scoops but we can't print them. That's why we decided to publish analysis instead... but everything that's outside the system has already been swept away, and if a newspaper like *La Nation* can continue to exist, it's because we are prepared as well to work within the system."

After lunch, we drive *La Nation*'s editor to her office to collect this week's edition, through the crowded downtown streets with their eternal, watching, unsmiling men. "It's a job that's intellectually very frustrating," she says. "On a weekly, you have to explain all the lies that have been told all week so you can explain what you want to say. No one has ever called us in to discuss our line but we know what we can't write. It's complete self-censorship."

Argentina steps up search for Nazi submarine

Phil Davison
Latin America Correspondent

It is an image that has fascinated and haunted Argentines since the end of the Second World War — Nazi officers dropped from U-boats, wading ashore with suitcases of gold ingots and disappearing into the night to take up new identities.

Adolf Eichmann, Josef Mengele and Martin Bormann were among those who fled to South America, aided by a network partly fictionalised by Frederick Forsyth in *The Odessa File*, to be welcomed by such leaders as Juan Domingo Peron.

Now, Argentina's President, Carlos Menem, has pledged to back efforts to prove the stories were true.

At the weekend he said the government would provide technology to try to find a U-boat believed to be embedded in shallow waters near the southern port of San Antonio. The navy and coastguard would join the search.

Locals say they saw the submarine arrive in an area known as Parrot's Cove, disgorge groups of shadowy figures and disappear. Jewish community leaders believe the Nazis were carrying gold and other treasures, much of it looted from victims of the Holocaust.

The U-boat has been spotted a few times since during particular weather conditions and low tides, and by a pilot, Mario Chironi, 15 years ago. He flew over the same area at the weekend to guide divers but so far they have found nothing.

A local paper broke the sto-

ry when it published a photograph of the boat said to have been taken when it arrived in the cove, 1,300 miles south of Buenos Aires. It got the picture from a member of a neo-Nazi group while researching a series on such groups' activities.

A Sao Antonio resident, Gisela Bochi de Passani, said she saw the submarine in 1945 when she looked out of her window to rest her eyes from knitting. "It disappeared soon afterwards, then I heard a plane go over, perhaps looking for the submarine."

Jewish sources said some of the Nazi booty arrived as gold, carried by hand or laundered through Swiss banks by melting and remoulding, while much also came in bank transfers via the "Evita trail".

The sources said that Peron sent his then lover, Eva Duarte — later to be his wife, "Evita" — to Switzerland to arrange and oversee the transfers.

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صبراً من الامل

German racist thugs jailed

A map of Germany with labels for Berlin, Bonn, and Rosenheim. Berlin is in the northeast, Bonn is in the west, and Rosenheim is in the south. The map also shows neighboring countries: Czech Republic to the east, Switzerland and Austria to the south, and Italy to the south.

Furthermore, he knows that attacking Brussels can bring in the votes. Just across the border in Austria, Jörg Haider's extreme right Freedom-Party recently won 27.6 per cent of the vote in European Parliament elections, playing an anti-Emu card. In Bavaria not only are fears of the euro deepening, but there is also evidence that if national currencies are abolished without time to prepare the public, monetary union could alienate opinion against political union too.

Tomorrow, South Tyrol!

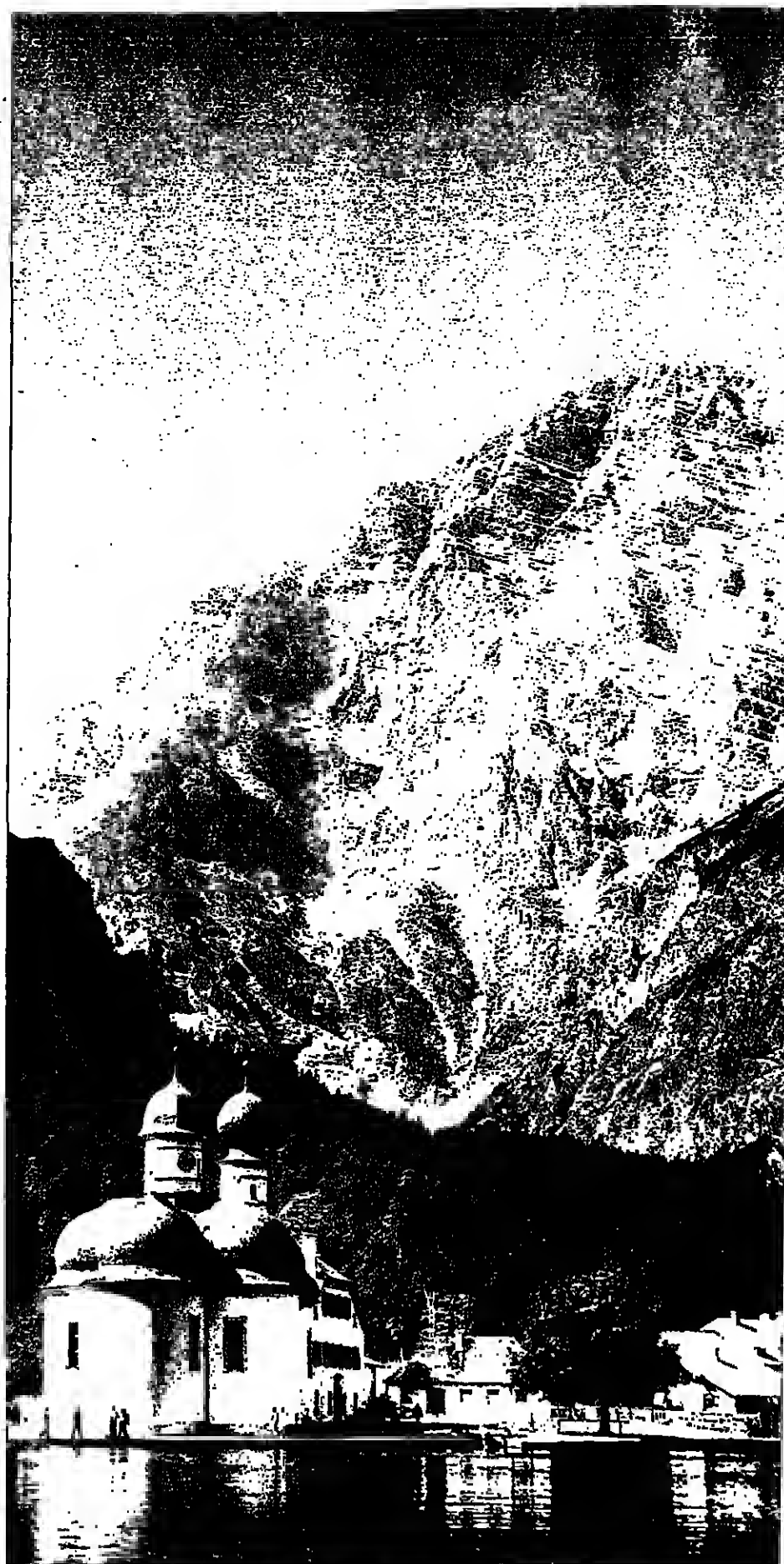


Image of tranquillity: Prosperous Bavaria may be, but insecurity is taking hold as the citizens feel increasingly that their doubts about Emu are being ignored

Organised racist attacks have abated in east Germany but foreigners are still the target of random violence. Two weeks ago an 18-year-old went on trial in Oranienburg, near Berlin, for the murder of another British building worker, Lee Hawthorn, in 1994. He allegedly tied Mr Hawthorn to his car and dragged him for five miles.

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100

Democracy the cure for classroom malaise

Funny how the people who most dislike pupils suing their schools for bad exam results are also the noisiest in proclaiming the virtues of the market. Surely the two teenagers who are demanding damages from the school which failed to get them through enough GCSEs merely want to provide all "failing" schools with a market disincentive, in the form of large financial penalties, to raise standards? Instead of being praised for their initiative and public-spiritedness, however, they are condemned for trying to lead us further into an American "litigation culture".

There is an element, and not just on the right of politics, which objects to financially-rewarded whingeing. They argue that, as with the compensation for the police officers traumatised at Hillsborough, this case could lead us from the sad to the silly, defined for these purposes as the woman in the United States who sued McDonald's for making its coffee hot, after she tried to hold the cup between her knees while driving. But the free marketeers have a strong argument. The best way to enforce rights and responsibilities, they say, is to make people pay for failing to live up to them.

What is wrong with bludgeoning education authorities into defining what their schools are supposed to achieve and concentrating efforts and resources on the poor performers? If the education chiefs are "horrified" at

the prospect of 70 former pupils queuing up to sue schools which have been condemned by inspectors, will this not give them a real incentive to do something about the causes of poor schools? An honest free marketeer would decline the temptation to crack jokes at the expense of lawyers, and instead accept that they are only the mechanism for enforcing contracts – in this case, implied contracts – between individuals, corporations and the state. An honest free marketeer would insist that there is nothing wrong with a litigation culture. After all, litigation is simply citizens asserting their rights in a way that actually has some bite, including their right to properly run public services.

If people had not been able to sue in the wake of the King's Cross fire and Zeebrugge, would London Underground and the ferry operators now be so concerned about safety? There are complications and anomalies, such as the McDonald's coffee ruling, and the fact that dead people cannot suffer damages. But, in circumstances where the courts may not be able to instruct service providers to tighten up their safety procedures, the threat of claims for damages may be the only effective and constant pressure for safety in public buildings, public transport and public services. Litigation pressure, indeed, might provide Citizen's Charter commitments some real teeth.

So, honest marketeer, what is the

problem with all of this? The problem is that the free market is not, in practice, the sole arbiter of value. In the case of children suing their former schools, the honest free marketeer would push the idea of legally-enforceable contracts beyond the logical extreme. Most lawyers seem to agree (unusual in itself, this) that the two 17-year-olds, who are retaking their GCSEs at sixth-form college, have a slim chance of success. In the jargon, their problem is one of multiple causation. In plain English, the plaintiffs have to prove to the court that their poor exam results were not, at least

partly, the result of laziness or a bad attack of exam nerves.

Consider the case – a hypothetical one, but for how much longer? – of a 50-year-old man suing the government for the distress experienced during a long spell of unemployment, which he claims was caused by the Treasury running a monetary policy that was too tight. How can he prove that government policy was primarily responsible for his, as an individual, being unable to find work? More practically, the health service is plagued by claims with a questionable prospect of success.

There is a fundamental weakness in

the American model of a society based on the law of contract. It is that the state is not a company. Few citizens are at liberty to withdraw from their contract with the state in the provision of services such as health, education, public transport, policing. The alternative model is of a society ruled by politics, in which those who are responsible for services are subjected to discipline, and ultimately the sack, for failing to deliver. What is striking about much of the unnecessary litigation which threatens to overwhelm this country is that people say they don't want money, they want justice. What they need is a political system that delivers justice (it largely fails to do that at present); but turning to the courts will end up creating as much frustration as it dispels.

The answer is to strengthen the accountability of our system. That in turn means welcoming another kind of litigation – that of judicial review. It is often derided as an esoteric branch of law invented by clever and rich lawyers, but it achieves the aim of ensuring that ministers and officials have to behave reasonably and to account for themselves.

A Bill of Rights and a written constitution are sometimes seen as part of the problem, when in fact they are part of the solution. Of course, Americans regularly take to the courts to dispute their constitu-

tional rights, but here those broad principle laws would have the advantage of sealing those rights through consensual acceptance, rather than opportunistic adversarialism.

So the answer to our educational ills is not to call in an army of solicitors and well-paid QCs. It is, instead, to call teachers and governors and politicians and administrators to account through all our available points of democratic pressure. We can sack councils, governments, and school governors with our regular vote. We should use it.

The cappa cuppa is down the tube

Talking of rights – can you believe it? London Underground wants to stop its staff drinking frothy, puffy, choicy coffee, and confine them instead to machine-churned tea and instant granules. It's hard to credit, but it's true. No wonder workers nearly went on strike last week. Faced with the prospect of an electronically stewed cuppa, wouldn't you fight for cappas (and lattes and mochas) instead? There are, after all, some things that matter more than mere bread alone. And continental coffee is one of them.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Junior doctors overstretched by hours cut

Sir: The comments of David Wreche ("Ministers want doctors to work 83-hour weeks", 28 November) are not shared by the majority of doctors, particularly in the surgical specialties. The reduction of additional worked hours from a previous average of 43 a week to a proposed 16 is impractical, since the workload in the hospital remains unchanged and the number of junior doctors has failed to rise significantly.

Junior doctors now find that during an on-call period they are suddenly responsible for the acute care of two to three times as many patients as in the past. These patients may be from a variety of different medical specialties the doctor is not normally familiar with.

The shift system that has been introduced in some hospitals results in particularly unsocial hours and working many more weekends and evenings than previously. Junior doctors slightly higher up in the ranks have to perform duties which are not appropriate to their experience, gained over several years of qualification; this prevents the natural development and progress of clinical skills.

The new deal means junior doctors working harder while on call. Now there is no chance of sleep. If anything, patients are going to be at greater risk from junior doctors working more intensely in more stressful circumstances than ever before.

To crown it all, there has been in real terms an absolute pay reduction because we are working fewer hours.

Unless there are more junior doctors there can be no easy way of reducing hours. It would be better to admit that we have to work long hours, and provide appropriate support. The majority of junior doctors are intelligent, hard-working and motivated people who entered medicine to make a professional career, and not to be reduced to the level of a clock-on clock-off production-line system.

SA WAJED
Registrar
Department of Surgery
The Whittington Hospital
London N19

Sir: Your article "Ministers want doctors to work 83-hour weeks" may have led Dr Rogers (letters, 30 November) to draw the wrong conclusions.

My commitment to reducing junior doctors' hours is as strong as ever and I reinforced this point during a speech I made at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham, last week. We have made enormous progress since we launched the New Deal initiative in 1991 and the old culture which demanded regular 100-hour weeks is a thing of the past.

In the coming weeks we shall be outlining the strategy to build on what has already been achieved and to target those problem areas that still remain. The New Deal has greatly improved the lives of the many junior doctors who are now working more civilised hours. This working more civilised hours is due to achievement principally due to the consultants, managers and task forces determined to make it possible.

GERALD MALONE
Minister for Health
Department of Health
London SW1



Assessing the soya bean risk

Sir: The genetic engineering of soya beans, which has led to UK protests at the import of such beans ("Greenpeace blockades beans with new genes", 30 November), raises questions about the right of consumers to information.

But a risk assessment of herbicide-resistant genetically engineered soya beans should include a full environmental health impact assessment of the pesticide as well as the beans.

This should cover pollution from energy used for raw material extraction, and hazards from the chemical manufacture, storage, use, food residues, contamination and disposal of the pesticide active ingredient, plus its breakdown products and "inerts". Will the chemical company involved produce such an assessment for public scrutiny?

Ironically, there is much activity at present across the European Union to introduce effective pesticide reduction policies. Integrated pest management techniques, biological control of weeds as well as insects, and the selection of naturally occurring crops resistant to hostile environmental factors have been introduced to cut pesticide usage quite effectively in some countries.

Some crops are now being genetically engineered to increase resistance to diseases, "weeds" and insect pests. This still raises major questions about the impact of such crops, but at least it does remove the need to use pesticides.

The soya bean story you report may produce the worst outcome for consumers, production workers

and the environment – a genetically engineered plant and continued use of significant pesticide usage: double jeopardy.

Dr ANDREW WATTERSON,
Director, Centre for Occupational and Environmental Health,
De Montfort University
Leicester

Sir: Gil Warnock (letter, 28 November) gives a tolerable sketch of the various changes to the environment that have taken place in just one area of these islands since the last ice age, but doesn't mention the many human disasters that have accompanied these changes.

The Irish famine, the Black Death of the 14th century and the many plagues that followed it, the famines of the 13th and early 14th century, are well known. There is sketchier historical record of previous plagues and famines in western Europe back to Roman times.

Archaeology shows that a major change in climate badly affected the northern and western parts of the British Isles in the Bronze Age – wheat, for example, could no longer be grown – and there appears to have been a severe fall in both population and material culture as a result. We can now only guess at what hunger, disease and warfare resulted from the competition for declining resources.

It is precisely because the environment changes, and can be changed by our human actions, that people espouse environmental

causes. By better understanding how we interact with our environment we hope, unlike our ancestors, to be able to avoid the pain that otherwise goes with those changes.

To answer Mr Warnock's question of whether the environment is endangered or just evolving, it depends on your point of view. From that of the bacteria that break down oil-spills, to take just one example, it hasn't looked better for aeons.

CHRISTOPHER PADLEY
Market Rasen, Lincolnshire

Malnutrition due to bad budgeting

Sir: There may well be some evidence of malnutrition in Britain, as the Rev Paul Nicholson maintains (letters, 28 November), but his suggestion that this is due to inadequate Income Support is a political, rather than a factual argument.

For a single person, social security benefit of £50 a week on top of housing expenses is sufficient to buy food and other essentials (students frequently manage on less). Similarly, a couple with two children should be able to manage on £119 of Income Support plus housing costs without meals.

Nutritious food is available cheaply in supermarkets. On Monday we had three friends round for dinner; the cost of our

meal of garlic and herb chicken pieces, Brussels, carrots and roast potatoes followed by apple pie and cream came to less than £1.50 per head.

It is not levels of Income Support that need to be addressed by the poverty lobby but the misallocation of these resources on non-essentials like tobacco, alcohol and the purchase of lottery tickets.

PAUL ASHTON
Eastbourne, East Sussex

Farming fat cat doubles intake

Sir: Confusion seems to have crept into the conversation I had with your correspondent for your article "Farming fat cats reap a rich harvest" (29 November). I am quoted as saying that CWS received "around £1m" in set-aside payments last year. For the record, the figure was over £2m.

CWS Agriculture supports complete reform of the Common Agricultural Policy, replacing the linkage to production with the development of payments on land set aside for environmental reasons where appropriate. However, such payments would, in all probability, have to be acreage-linked.

MIKE CALVERT
General Manager
CWS Agriculture
Leicester

Sir: Govin Strang's desire to reduce subsidy to large farming businesses and your research into farming

subsidies ("Farming fat cats reap a rich harvest", 29 November) raise a carload of issues.

Large farmers do receive large subsidies, but not disproportionately to the area farmed. Large farmers also have more hired labour. My recent, at this stage tentative, research, based on data supplied by Cambridge University, suggests that a fall in support by say 10 per cent would reduce employment by a little over 10 per cent. Agriculture is one of the biggest industries in the UK and in many areas it is the only source of employment.

UK farming has undergone significant structural change, and pain, compared with our European neighbours. It would be a pity if these hard-won advantages were lost.

Efficient production with reduced dependency on support for food production should allow any government to target resources to achieve its, or more importantly the electorate's, objectives. These may be cheaper food, maintenance of the environment, employment, organic farming, lower taxes or whatever.

SIMON WARD
Cottenham, Cambridgeshire

Needling issue

Sir: I am used to the suspension of logical thought when people discuss drugs, but can someone explain why the Irish, with one of the highest hard-drugs addiction rates, should want to impose their approach on Holland, with one of the lowest ("French lay siege to fleshpots of Amsterdam", 29 November)?

CHARLIE HARRIS
London NW3

Women do win art prizes

Sir: Suzanne Moore ("Masters and mistresses", 29 November) laments about "male privilege" in what is in the end a weak endorsement of a quota system in which both sexes will automatically be represented on shortlists such as the Turner Prize. Providing judges make nominations and award prizes only on the basis of the quality of the work, such absurd tokenism is unnecessary.

Last year, as a judge of the most valuable open art competition in the country, the NatWest Prize (totalling £35,000), I sat with five other jurors, all men (in suits), and we awarded all five prizes, including the £25,000 first prize, to those we considered the five best artists from over a thousand entrants. They were all women.

DAVID LEE
Editor, Art Review
London EC1

Blowing hot and cold on Celsius

Sir: I feel your item on the Fahrenheit v Celsius debate ("Whatever happened to Fahrenheit?", 30 November) may have underestimated the guile of the British public in subverting attempts at standardisation.

Rather than reject Celsius outright, we have merged it with our beloved Fahrenheit scale, for greater conversational effect. Thus, in summer we use Fahrenheit because the numbers are higher ("90 in the shade yesterday, old boy"), and in the winter we use Celsius because the numbers are lower ("Do you know it went down to minus 10 last night?").

Since the numbers in the middle refer to perfectly ordinary weather which no one wants to talk about, we can pull off this trick with ease, and defy anyone who tries to change it.

BRIAN HACKETT
Derby Dale, West Yorkshire

Shameful aid cut

Sir: I am dismayed at the Government's decision to cut overseas aid by 5.4 per cent (£158m) – this on top of a cut of £124m last year.

I wrote recently to my MP pointing out that Britain spends only 0.26 per cent of its GNP on overseas aid, though the UN-recommended figure is 0.71. My letter was passed to the Overseas Development Administration, and in her reply, Baroness Chalker stated: "Your constituent mentioned the target of 0.7 per cent of GNP... Our position on this remains unchanged. We've agreed to this target but not a timetable for reaching it."

Is it any wonder that we are becoming increasingly disillusioned with politicians?

VINCENT KINGSTON
Oxford

Boundary wall

Sir: The point is not, as Sam Scorer implies (letter, 31 November) whether the planner or the architect is better qualified. The point is that the planner is employed to act in the public interest; the architect is employed to act in the interest of his client, who is usually not primarily concerned with architectural values or aesthetics.

ROGER JAMES
Secretary, The Portsmouth Society
Southsea, Hampshire

analysis



Today's 'scoop'

Another day, another piece of research. Yesterday many of us learned for the first time that thousands of Jews had fought beside Germans during the Second World War. The reaction in many was one of horror. While 6 million Jews were being exterminated, others were going hand in hand with the Nazis who had dreamt up the Final Solution. Even worse, the research established that 77 senior officers of mixed Jewish race or with Jewish wives had been accepted as having German blood by none other than Hitler himself.

Was this proof of a degree of collaboration, of a level of complicity that might be used to undermine the moral dimension in the lessons of the Holocaust?

The truth is much more prosaic. The research was carried out by Bryan Rigg, 25, an American studying history at Darwin College, Cambridge. For the past four years, Mr Rigg has criss-crossed Germany and travelled as far afield as Canada and Turkey in order to uncover tales of the Mischlinge, those of half or quarter Jewish blood who are not recognised as Jews by other Jews, but who were classified as such by the Nazis.

In the course of his travels, he has unearthed documents which show that two field marshals, 10 generals, 14 colonels and 30 majors in the Wehrmacht were of Jewish extraction. Field Marshal Edward Mink, deputy to the Luftwaffe commander Hermann Goering, had a Jewish father, but Goering falsified his papers, declaring: "I will decide who is a German."

Others with Jewish fathers or grandfathers won military decorations. Helmut Wilberg, winner of the knight's cross, had a Jewish mother, but he kept his origins secret and went on to develop the German concept of *blitzkrieg*. Even Helmut Schmidt, West German Chancellor from 1974 to 1982, kept secret the fact that his grandfather was Jewish, and he went on to become a lieutenant in the Luftwaffe. Mr Rigg's research appears meticulous and was described by fellow historians as "useful" yesterday in that it was gleaned from people who lived through paradoxical times or those who lived close to them in the immediate aftermath. But fellow academics and Jewish historians said the revelations were not new and should not really surprise anybody.

"It has been known for a long time that many Jews who wanted to hide from Hitler believed that the army was as good a place as any," said Rabbi Albert Friedlander, dean of the Leo Baeck rabbinical training college. "The army was not the Nazi party and elements of it were actually opposed to Hitler."

"Some believed there was a better Germany - a Germany of Beethoven and Goethe that would last longer than Hitler. They had no idea of what was to come, and many would have known nothing about the extermination camps."

Indeed, according to the historian Evelyn Wilcock, author of *Pacifism and the Jews*, Germans who were half or quarter Jewish were routinely conscripted right up to the start of the war. By the outbreak of hostilities, thousands would have been in the army.

"They had no choice," she said. "The penalty for not serving was death, and the death penalty would often apply to family members, too." And many of those now described as being of Jewish extraction would not have regarded themselves as Jewish. It is certainly unlikely that someone with a Jewish grandfather would call himself a Jew.

From 1942 onwards, however, Hitler ordered them to be rooted out of the army. Some were sent to labour camps, but others were helped by fellow soldiers or commanding officers, who felt more loyal to those they had fought with than to the Nazis.

There is, nevertheless, the potential for some embarrassment here - not in suggestions that some Jews collaborated, but in the way German attempts to create a pure race are reflected in some ways by Jews themselves. "In one of George Steiner's plays, Hitler turns round to some Jews at one point and says 'Where do you think I got the idea of a Chosen People from?'" said Mrs Wilcock. "What is embarrassing is that some of our own people put an emphasis on descent credentials in the same way as the Nazis did in their attempts to create a pure Aryan race."

The Jewish view of the Holocaust is one of black and white. It is like cowboys and Indians, good guys and bad guys. But it gets a little blurred when you start talking about Mischlinge from mixed families. And because the teaching of Holocaust history has a moral and ethical content, it has the capacity to turn children's heads.

"I am Jewish but my husband is not. Recently, a certain Jewish woman suggested that my children should wear badges to show that they are not marriageable. That is precisely the sort of thing that the Nazis did to the Jews in Germany and it is precisely the sort of thing we need to avoid. The racial exclusion of Jews by Jews simply defeats the object."

Steve Boggan

The Holocaust heritage

Every day brings new facts about the Final Solution. Antony Lerman asks how much we need to know

It won't be this year or next, but before too long, the survivors of the Nazi Holocaust will all be dead. The living memory of the tragedy will be extinguished, and a priceless link between past and present finally severed. The inexorable transition from memory to history will be complete - or will it?

Such a transition is the inevitable fate of every historical event, but there are few signs of it happening to the Holocaust. Quite the opposite. The Holocaust is unfinished business.

There is an acceleration in the pace of historical research and writing. New campaigns to settle accounts - legal, political, financial - have a harder, more urgent edge. Controversies over the siting and erection of memorials and museums touch the deepest sensitivities. The political and moral repercussions hang thick in the air as if the past is a dimension of the present, but one that we cannot physically touch or see. The presence of the Holocaust in popular culture is ubiquitous. Far from being an event which was so unique as to be practically outside of human history, it has become part of daily life.

The expansion of historical scholarship has been stimulated by the new information emerging in huge quantities of documents from archives in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, which were closed to Western scholars before the collapse of communism. This in turn has fuelled a reassessment of studies completed before 1989, with historians and investigative journalists examining the roles of individual, corporate and state actors in the tragedy whose actions had not come under the spotlight before now. The revelation that significant numbers of officers with Jewish backgrounds served in the German armed forces stems directly from this new approach to Holocaust history.

From the 1960s and the Eichmann trial, as the Holocaust entered the public consciousness in a big way, it became a subject for film-makers, producers of documentaries, novelists, poets and even television mini-series. This cultural production has continued to grow, again encouraged by the collapse of communism and the willingness of people in former communist states to confront this aspect of their past.

Further, many survivors were reluctant to speak about their experiences in the first decades after the war. But as the Holocaust has become an integral part of our culture, and as those survivors come nearer to the ends of their lives, there has

been an outpouring of memoirs and accounts. A fourth reason is that the Holocaust remains an issue of immense political and cultural significance in Germany today, with different groups defining themselves according to the part they believe the Holocaust should play in determining Germany's future path.

But most significant is the deliberate effort, during the past three decades, to place the Holocaust centre stage as the key historical, moral and legal problem of our age, and the central issue of Jewish life. Much of this effort, quite naturally, has come from Jews and Jewish organisations, but by no means all.

For many years, Jews were reluctant to locate the Holocaust at the centre of their communal concerns. But in the post-war years new leaders emerged, too young to have experienced the Holocaust, for whom the Holocaust became a powerful motivating force. They saw that, as time passed, it would be impossible to call the world to account for the crimes committed or to record survivors' accounts of what happened.

This effort produced extensive results: among them were new laws to prosecute suspected Nazi war criminals in some Western countries, the establishment of the US National Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, an international campaign to secure compensation for stolen

Jewish property in Eastern Europe, the building of countless memorials in synagogues, community centres, towns and villages. And most recently the international campaign to recover the assets of Holocaust victims held in Swiss banks.

The consequences of all this are not wholly welcome. Since much Holocaust-related activity has developed a momentum and logic of its own, that might be expected. But it applies also to the conscious attempt to shape public memory and influence political action.

For example, as a quest for justice, the campaign against the Swiss banks and the effort to obtain compensation for stolen property in Eastern Europe cannot be faulted, but if, in the process, the image of the Holocaust changes from that of a moral issue to one of gold, property and cash, the consequences will be damaging.

The Holocaust continues to shape the political outlook of significant sectors of the Israeli right on Middle East peace, Israel's relations with the world at large and relations with the Jewish diaspora. That is deeply worrying. It fosters an attitude of mind which sees every concession or compromise as the breeding ground for another Holocaust.

Finally, placed at the centre of Jewish communal concerns, as this war has had a powerful impact on the shaping of modern Jewish identity. That Jews

should learn about this aspect of their history goes without saying, but that it should become the principal reason to be Jewish makes little sense. The enduring quality of an identity derived from the glorification of one's status as a victim hardly bears thinking about.

What distinguishes these negative consequences is that they are the product of deliberate policy choices and consciously adopted attitudes, grounded in a narrow and philosophically bankrupt view of how to secure the Jewish future - a view epitomised by the utterly unacceptable, though sadly too common, notion of Jewish assimilation as a second or silent Holocaust.

But since the choices and attitudes are made on earth, they can and should be altered, however difficult that may be. And the difficulty is compounded when the Holocaust is used as a justification for action, because its effect - often deliberately engineered - is to prevent debate and de-legitimise dissenting voices.

In effect, along with growing attention and the delayed transition from memory to history, there is a hardening trend towards politicisation. Left unchanged, it will undermine the continuing and very necessary process of embedding the Holocaust in public memory.

Antony Lerman is executive director of the Institute for Jewish Policy Research.

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The period pains of Location-in-the-Wold



Miles Kingston

There was a spirit of unrest abroad in the small Cotswold village of Steeple Netherby, and this was a most untoward thing, for until very recently Steeple Netherby had been marked by a contentment which almost bordered on self-satisfaction. Not to put too fine a point on it, Steeple Netherby had become famous. There have been people in the village who were unaware of the recent fame, but there could not be many. For it

was in this unassuming, unchanged and picturesque spot that the filming for the recent TV adaptation of Jane Austen's little-known novel *Rick and Rick* had taken place.

Much of the exterior filming for this very successful realisation had been done outside the house belonging to Colonel Sands, who, as his rank suggests, had been in the army and gave people to understand that he had seen much exciting action, though as he had been in the catering corps, the excitement had been generally limited to the thrill of supplying bread for the men on time and withdrawing broccolis when it had proved unpopular. He had been out of the army some little while, but had taken his rank with him when he left, and had indeed even carefully improved the rank as time went by, for he had been no more than a major when he left, and was now a colonel and he very much hoped to become a general if he should ever move house again.

"I am going to the shop," the Colonel called to his wife

Susan one morning in May. "My dear, there are some people outside the house taking photographs. Perhaps you should wait a moment."

"I'll give them and their blasted photographs," said the Colonel. Yet despite his strong words, he stayed tamely inside the house and peered through the curtains until the strangers had gone.

"We cannot complain," said Mrs Sands, coming downstairs. She paused at a window where she noticed a vase of anemones looking a little underwatered, gave them a brisk box on the ears (for she was more military by inclination than her husband) and passed briskly on. "We made a lot of money from the TV company for the use of our house in the film, and we cannot complain if viewers come to gaze at it. It is not as if they try to break into the house and take souvenirs or ask for a cup of water."

"I am sure you are right, my dear," said Colonel Sands, who had indeed answered a knock on the door the previous day and charged the TV pilgrim 10p for a glass of water, for which he now felt

slightly ashamed. "It is just that it seems to go on and on. Just when we think it will all die down, the TV company repeats the blessed film. Or *Country Life* does a feature called 'The Village in the heart of Austen Country'. And everyone comes flocking again. I wish to high heaven we had never been involved. I certainly hope we will never be involved again."

"Then you will be pleased to hear that the danger has been averted," said his wife.

"I'm sorry," said her uncomprehending husband. "According to the local paper, a TV company intends to make a new comedy series called *Period Pains*. This comedy is set in a picturesque village which is fed up to the back teeth with being used as a period setting, somewhere like Castle Combe."

"Or us," said her husband. "Very like us," said Mrs Sands. "It is indeed based on us. It is based on many of the things which happened to us. Like the time the lorry bringing authentic 18th-century manure overturned, and the village stank for three days. Or the runaway reindeer. Or

the time they put back the wrong TV dishes on the wrong houses..."

"Yes, yes," said the Colonel testily. "So they're making a film about a village like us which is always being plagued by film companies, and they are coming here to film this comedy, are they?"

"No," said his wife. "They are going to Lower Ashby."

"Lower Ashby?" said the Colonel aghast. "Lower Ashby? They can't do that!" Lower Ashby was a nearby village, smaller but equally picturesque, and, if the truth be known, more unsightly.

"Oh, but they are," said his wife. "Lower Ashby is going to play the part of us. I thought you'd be pleased. I know how fed up you are with us being Location-in-the-Wold, as you so wittily call it." "Lower Ashby?" repeated the Colonel, as if it were a mantra. "I cannot believe it! It must not happen."

An extract from *Art and Adaptability*, a new Jane Austen-style novel by the author of *Tact and Turnip*, *Ink and Illusion*, etc. and soon to be a major TV success.

صكرا من الامال

New Labour, new Stalinists? Not a chance

Take two fictional Labour MPs. One is Nigel Barton, the heroic and flinty working class left-wing MP immortalised by Dennis Potter in the 1970s. The other is Lynton Charles, the irredeemably middle-class Blairite careerist lovingly parodied in each week's *New Statesman*. Is Labour's new disciplinary code simply a way of advancing the interests of the latter at the expense of the former? Is it plain sensible leadership or more evidence of the Labour leader's Kim II Sung tendency towards democratic centralism?

These questions, even if not openly expressed, will lurk in the minds of the Parliamentary Labour Party when they debate the new code tomorrow. It's certain that the PLP will back, by an overwhelming majority, the creation of a new disciplinary offence of bringing "the party into disrepute". The more interesting issue is how much of their independence as MPs they are sacrificing by doing so. This isn't just an academic question. The new offence hasn't merely been created to make the leadership sound macho. It's true that the existing standing orders of the PLP already oblige MPs to turn up regularly and have a "good division record"; to "refrain from personal attacks upon colleagues orally or in writing"; to "act in harmony with the policies of the Parliamentary Labour Party". But it isn't clear, for example, that for Jeremy Corbyn to sponsor a Commons book launch for Gerry Adams, the Sinn Féin president, cuts across any of these obligations. (Grown-up party leaders can scarcely argue that no Labour MP should under any circumstances make contact with Sinn Féin when ministers and shadow ministers do exactly that.) But had the code been in force, and had Gerry Adams not himself withdrawn from the event, the whips might well have argued that the adverse publicity would have brought the party into disrepute.

It would also have made it considerably easier to arraign Alan Simpson, the prolific and quietly obsessive Campaign Group member, for the dozens of occasions on which he is alleged to have publicly criticised the Labour leadership since becoming an MP. Not to mention the latest case in which he, Mr Corbyn and the outgoing veteran Eddie Loyden, have signed a mass petition originating with the Socialist Workers' Party.

In other words, it's there to be used if necessary. Removing the whip, the ultimate penalty which the Chief Whip already has, can mean the MP is unable to stand as a Labour candidate if the punishment isn't lifted before a general election. What's more, the new rules carry an extra stipulation – that the MP's constituency must be told even if the MP is simply reprimanded. There may be some coyness parties where this is a badge of honour, but many fewer than there used to be.

In theory, a megalomaniac party leader could use it as an instrument for preventing even the most minor deviation from the party



Donald Macintyre

MPs fears that a disciplinary code will stamp out legitimate dissent are unfounded

line and thus neutralise Parliament's historic role to question the government.

But in practice this would not be for long. First, a seriously Stalinist leader, backed by a whips' office worthy of the NKVD and an entirely supine party, could probably use the existing – and more catch-all – duty to act in harmony with party policy for that purpose if he wanted. But anyway, an MP cannot be penalised unless the PLP votes in favour. Second, the new rules will not remove an MP's right to abstain from voting for the government "on matters of deeply-held personal conviction".

Is it likely, for example, that Tam Dalyell, one of the most persistent questioners of the executive and all its works, would be held by a majority of his colleagues to have brought the party into disrepute if he persisted in asking questions about some malfeasance by ministers? Or the Labour chairman of a select committee who had strongly criticised the government's social security policy? Or Dennis Skinner for calling for the renationalisation of coal? Hardly.

What's more, the new rules provide one genuine improvement in backbencher democracy – the formal creation of departmental committees to which ministers are required to give account of themselves and regularly hear the views of MPs. This proposal isn't just cosmetic. It requires, for example, notice of plans for all "forthcoming Bills, major statutory instruments, Green and White Papers" and that "backbenchers will be consulted before major policy decisions are taken".

The code has an interesting history, dating from the mid-Seventies in which relations between government and PLP were at something of an all-time low. It was drawn up by a backbench committee – chaired, ironically, by John Horam, now a Tory minister but then a member of the Tribune Group – but never fully put into practice. If they had been, it's possible some low-cost legislation like the Freedom of Information Act and race relations reforms might have been introduced with a resulting improvement in party morale. It's even possible that the Prime Minister might have been persuaded through better communications with the PLP to hold the election in 1978 rather than 1979.

So yes, the code is designed to try to make the Labour Party as disciplined as the Tories were in the Eighties, something which Labour has chronically failed to do in government in the past. It is supposed to remind Labour MPs that they will owe the election of a Labour government not to their own individual militancy as MPs but to the changes the party in general, and Tony Blair in particular, has made. It is supposed to send a clear message that you can't be elected on a new Labour platform and then spend your time sabotaging it once you've arrived. But they aren't anything like as liberal as their critics will claim. The Nigel Bartons won't have it all their way. But nor will the Lynton Charles's.

State licence to bug and burgle

by Patricia Wynn Davies

There is a law going through Parliament that will allow the police to break into a solicitor's office, install a listening device, overhear and record conversations between solicitor and client, conduct a covert search, snoop in files and sift through and copy privileged documents.

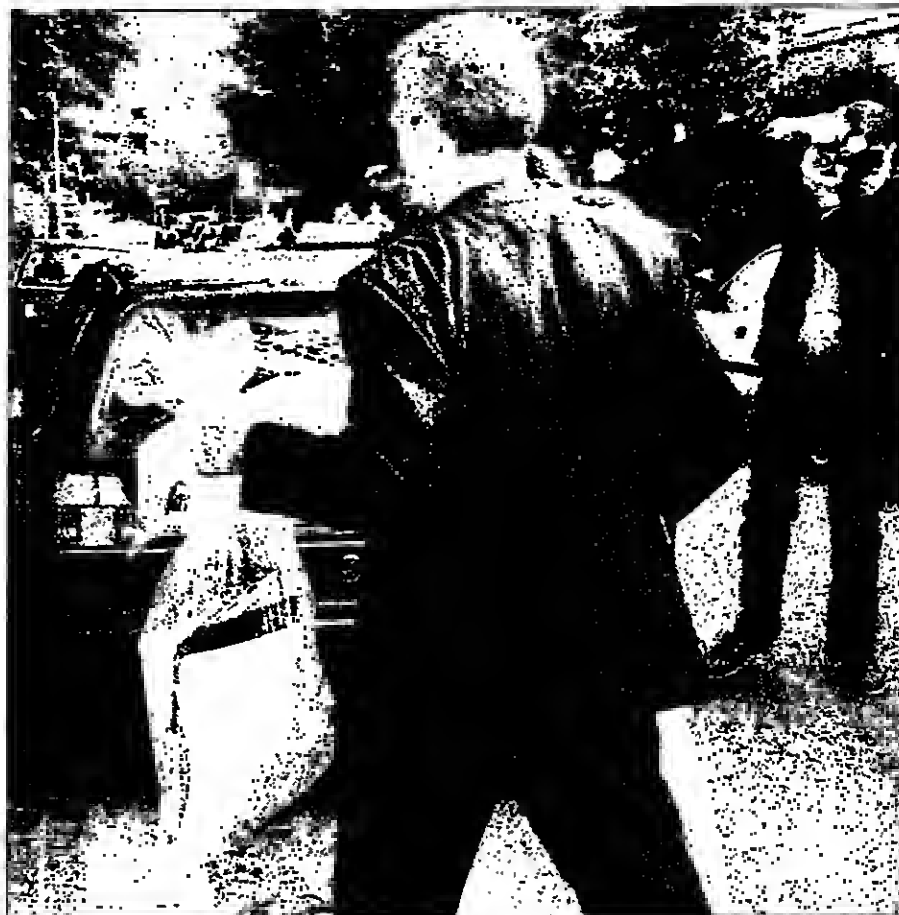
The same law, contained in Part III of the Police Bill, which completed its Lords Committee Stage last night, will allow a similar sort of activity at the home of a journalist whose contacts might be useful to the police. And because the law will cover "conduct by a large number of persons in pursuit of a common purpose", it will legalise, to coin "Spycatcher" Peter Wright's memorable phrase, "bugging and burgling" at the home of an environmental protestor.

Extreme examples perhaps, but they will happen and we may never find out. Officers will get their authorisation from their chief constable or an assistant chief constable, or in the case of customs, a designated senior officer. That contrasts with the requirement for a warrant from a court, in the majority of cases, to search openly and seize property, and with the power to tap two-way telephone conversations, which, following a ruling by the European Court of Human Rights, needs a warrant from the Home Secretary under the 1985 Interception of Communications Act.

The go-ahead will be based on the chief officer's subjective assessment that the surveillance is likely to be of substantial value in the prevention or detection of serious crime, and can allow covert searching and/or bugging, or both.

People whose privacy, correspondence, home or office (including the office of their employers – a City institution, perhaps – or indeed any other premises) is invaded do not have to be under suspicion of being disposed to commit serious crime themselves. And in another departure from the somewhat different standards in the Interception of Communications Act, all material or information gathered – even where the new Commissioner proposed by the Bill to handle complaints finds it not properly authorised – will be admissible as evidence in a trial.

The Government took its cue for that provision from a law lords' ruling in July. This stated that evidence obtained through trespass and bugging (under the existing Home Office guidelines that the Act is



A new law gives the go-ahead for covert snooping on people's homes and offices. Your only protection: 'Trust the police'

to replace) could be used in a prosecution, which otherwise would not have gone ahead, against a drugs importer. It is tucked away in a schedule, as is an instruction to the Commissioner not to give any reasons for rejecting a complaint.

The Commissioner will be a senior serving or retired judge, but he or she will have a highly limited remit to overturn an authorisation in the face of a complaint. A chief constable will be able to authorise the surveillance or covert search if he or she thinks it necessary. That means that the Commissioner can only interfere if the decision, in legal jargon, is so unreasonable as to be "perverse".

The Bill leaves nothing to chance by specifying that judicial review principles should be applied. The Commissioner's decisions, for good measure,

cannot be "appealed or questioned in any court." In short, the powers in the Bill could not have been drafted more widely. The prospects of getting them drawn more tightly are slim.

Of course, the aim of this substantial increase of virtually self-regulatory police powers is detecting and catching serious criminals, as Baroness Blatch, the Home Office minister presently handling the Bill, emphasised in a recent letter to Lord Browne-Wilkinson, a law lord. He is one of a handful who have dared to put their heads above the parapet to invoke the constitutional principle that ministers, officials or police officers are supposed to have no greater right than any ordinary citizen to invade an Englishman's home, and suggest that the powers in the Bill are too wide.

"One could argue that it is crime that poses the biggest threat," wrote the baroness. "Our homes are, of course, much more likely to be violated by burglars than the executive. However, the provisions are not meant to tackle this sort of criminal, or the protector against a new road or the journalist who refuses to reveal his source. Our provisions are needed to tackle the serious organised criminal... who may infiltrate our banking and financial institutions and who has no qualms about using legitimate fronts, such as firms of solicitors or accountants, to launder the vast profits from drug trafficking and other illicit activities."

She invoked another recent legal case to support the Government's insistence that the courts should not be involved, where a judge had said it would

be impossible to put himself in a chief constable's shoes to make an operational decision to authorise or not. Warranting by the Home Secretary, the authorisation procedure for MIS – the first inroad into the "Englishman's home" principle – could be seen as interfering with police independence.

So the message is "trust the police", and it is one that Labour is prepared, in the final event, to sign up to. Lord Melnosh, the party's home affairs spokesman in the Lords, made a so far unsuccessful attempt last week to introduce a narrowly-drawn amendment to protect legal privilege, but not currently protected documents such as personal records or journalistic and other confidential material for which a court order must be sought.

In truth, nobody who has studied the progress of this part of the Bill expects it to be changed very much at all when it emerges from the Lords to complete an equally uneventful passage through the Commons. Labour has convinced itself, if not its critics, that despite the blanket nature of the Bill, the powers will be used sparingly and responsibly under authority given at a very senior level by chief constables, who are not going to want to be the target of challenges, however ineffectual, from aggrieved citizens.

Despite the fact that the tribunals set up to regulate MIS, M16 and GCHQ have never upheld a single complaint, it is prepared to have faith in the Commissioner. But three leading barristers have drawn up an opinion for Liberty, the civil rights organisation, saying that the power to be vested in chief officers will violate Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights which guarantees respect for privacy, home and correspondence, and Article 13, which provides for the right to effective legal remedy.

This is the same human rights convention that Labour has pledged to make part of British law. Under a Tory government, Labour is in a cleft stick over law and order. But the political embarrassment will catch up with a Labour party in government when the first human rights complaint after a bungled police operation is launched. And in years to come, when suspects may know for sure – for whom will ever know for sure? – that covert searches and snooping have become routine, ministers can reflect on the fact that it all began here.

There's no hiding from fame

For some, celebrity is their reason for living. But not for the refuseniks. By Peter Popham

Samuel Beckett was staying with his wife Suzanne at a hotel south of Tunis in October 1969 when the disaster struck. A telegram arrived from his French publisher, Jérôme Lindon. "Dear Sam and Suzanne," it went. "In spite of everything they have given you the Nobel Prize – I advise you to go into hiding..."

Deeply distressed, Beckett responded by confining himself to his hotel room. "But with dozens of journalists milling around," writes James Knowlson in the new biography, *Damned to Fame*, "...it soon became obvious that something had to be done." Jerome Lindon flew out and "negotiated a gentlemen's agreement with the press that they should be allowed a few minutes to take photographs, provided that the publicity author was allowed to remain totally silent. Three days after the totally silent, Beckett made an appearance... smoking a cigar, with his hair cut very short... he sat down, looking ill at ease, said nothing, and puffed away at his cigar. The cameras whirled, and, before the cigar even had time to burn down a single centimetre, he was whisked away and back to his room."

Samuel Beckett is the presiding deity in the pantheon of anti-fame; the swelling ranks of writers and other creative types who are celebrated for their works but almost equally celebrated for rejecting celebrity: slamming the door in the face of fame, spurning interview requests, sedulously resisting all attempts to inveigle them into explaining themselves.

Beckett is the archetype of all such refuseniks, not only because he was a towering genius but because he was also stunningly photogenic: huge, piercing pale blue eyes, a tomahawk of a nose, a sensual, secretive mouth, and the etching of the years only made him craggier, more poble-looking. That face combined with his stubborn silence created more of a Beckett mystique than any number of spell-

binding public appearances could have achieved.

But Beckett's attitude to his fame, as the relative abundance of photographs of him make clear, was positively rapturous compared to that of other modern writers. The only available photograph of the American novelist Thomas Pynchon dates from a school yearbook of 1953: a buck-toothed teenager wearing a school and a crew-cut peers into the camera. Ten years later, when *Timing* decided to run a piece on the new literary star, a photographer for the magazine visited the address in Mexico City he had been given. A tall man answered the door and told him that Pynchon would be back around 5pm. Returning at that time, the photographer discovered that the room had been emptied of possessions. He realised that the person who had spoken to him must have been Pynchon. That supposed sighting, 33 years ago, was the last to date.

JD Salinger, author of *The Catcher in the Rye*, who gave his last interview in 1980, has been almost equally elusive. In Salinger's case there is a self-destructive element to his urge to disappear. His works were getting shorter and shorter even before he went to ground, but he seems to have stopped writing altogether many years ago. Instead he digs up whatever he can find on JD Salinger and destroys it. It would be interesting to know what he intends by this, but he is unlikely to furnish an explanation.

Neurosis on this scale, however, is exceptional. Pynchon continues to write and publish, albeit at heretofore long intervals. Cormac McCarthy, the best-selling author of *All the Pretty Horses*, shuns publicity of every sort, and when elected to the Writers' Hall of Fame in El Paso, Texas, the town where he lives, he followed Beckett's example and sent a representative to collect the honour. But in other respects McCarthy appears to live a full and normal life.



The same applies to Patrick Suskind, the Bavarian author of the chilling best-seller *Perfume*, who lives quietly in Munich, speaks excellent English and has a group of fiercely protective friends, and never, never talks to journalists.

Submission to the demands of celebrity is a form of surrender, and the only way to ensure that nothing of importance is yielded up is to yield nothing. In *The Ordeal of Gilbert Pinfold*, Evelyn Waugh delineates the nightmare that all shy writers must fear. Written at a time when BBC Radio profiles of cultural personalities were still a novelty, it opens with the arrival of a journalist called Angel to

interview Pinfold, a novelist. During the meeting, Pinfold is overwhelmed by the impression that Angel is an enemy who wants to take something away from him; afterwards, he enters a state of lethargy and paranoia that nothing can shake. Cormac McCarthy's shyness towards the media, according to his brother Dennis, is "almost like a superstition. He's afraid he'll ruin whatever he's doing." No writer can avoid going through a medium to reach his public, but for Beckett and the rest, whose point in common is the intense seriousness with which they regard their work, the medium needs to be as pure and transparent as possible, so that the words as written can prevail. Because after all it is not fame as such that they fear to be damned to – otherwise they could simply destroy their work after writing it – but fame for the wrong reasons, for the trivial incidents of biography.

Van Morrison, perhaps the only rock star who shares this morbid fear of celebrity, is notorious for the tongue-lashing he gives to the rare journalists permitted to attempt to interview him; and when an unauthorised biography of him appeared this year, he contemplated huying up the entire print run.

But what Morrison craves is not obscurity, but unmediated contact with his audience. In 1983, a teacher in Somerset called Andy Lock wrote to *Jim'll Fix It* asking Morrison to play at his wedding. There was no response, but then late on the afternoon of the wedding day, out of the blue, the Man showed. "He stayed about an hour, very nervous," Lock recalled. "We talked to him for about 40 minutes about anything, all sorts. Quite difficult – how do you talk to somebody like that, when you've been listening to their music for years?"

Additional research by Tommaso Nelli.

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business & city

Business news desk: tel 0171-238 2636 fax 0171-238 2096
BUSINESS & CITY EDITOR: JEREMY WARNER

Racal shares shed 18% on warning

Chris Godsmark
Business Correspondent

Racal Electronics will this morning attempt to regain the confidence of investors after an unexpected profits warning by the defence and telecommunications group yesterday sent its shares plunging by more than 18 per cent.

The news, which stunned City analysts, wiped more than £125m off Racal's stock market value, ending a dire few months in which the company lost out to British Telecom in a £1bn contract bid to replace the armed forces' telephone network and learned of further delays to another programme to replace British Army mobile radios. The shares ended the day 50p lower at 225p.

In a statement to the Stock Exchange, Racal warned that its pre-tax profits for this year were likely to be £20m less than analysts had expected, at around £50m. This represents a drop of 29 per cent from the profits already reported for last year of £70.4m.

Racal also surprised analysts by bringing forward the announcement of its results for the first six months of this year from Thursday to today. The statement said the results were expected to show profits of £21m after a previously announced ex-

ceptional charge of £10m for the restructuring of the Data Group subsidiary.

The announcement blamed a "significant reduction" in orders from the group's Radio Communications division, which makes a range of mobile radio systems sold to military forces around the world.

The difficulties were likely to reduce the radio arm's sales this year by £30m, compared with last year's £161m, pushing the business into the red. Of the £20m drop in profits, the radio division would account for £15m, with a further £5m of what the company described as "hits and pieces, though nothing serious".

Senior directors, led by chief executive David Elsbury, met last Friday for a regular monthly board meeting where continued problems with the progress of the radio arm came to a head.

Mr Elsbury said yesterday: "There are slippages in three major orders, one with the UK government, one with the Middle East and one in Latin America. We haven't lost the orders but we could see them slipping. We decided, I think correctly, to act prudently and inform the City."

However, the statement left analysts perplexed. One said: "Selling military radios isn't like running Marks & Spencers.

Orders for these products are hooked at least a year or 18 months in advance. So why did it take so long for the board to learn about this?"

Mr Elsbury insisted he was happy with the way the radio arm was run, but blamed its continued decline on world-wide defence cutbacks. "We are in total control of our forecasting but lead times in military radios are three years," he said.

The division makes the Jaguar battlefield radio which has proved popular with many armed forces around the world and has notched up sales of some £400m since its introduction in the early 1980s. But in recent years Racal has faced fierce competition from larger defence electronics suppliers such as GEC of the UK and Thomson CSF from France.

The company is currently reviewing the Radio Communications business's long-term future, though these further delays to normally lucrative military contracts could put a question mark over its survival as a major part of the group.

Another problem has been the UK government's repeated slippage to a £2bn order to replace the Army's battlefield radio network. An announcement on the contract has been delayed from 1997 to 1999.

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Better than expected: In spite of falling profits at Center Parcs, Brian Stewart denied the division was up for sale as overall profits rose at S&N

Scottish & Newcastle to roll out themed pubs

Nigel Cope

Scottish & Newcastle, Britain's largest brewer, is planning an aggressive expansion of some of its branded pubs and restaurants to take advantage of the growing popularity of themed bars and bistros.

The group plans to promote its Chef & Brewer chain as

upmarket pub-restaurants and develop 35 outlets by the end of this year with a target of 150.

The Barras & Co community pubs will also be rolled out over the next two years after successful trials in the North and South-east. There are currently 24 of these bars with 10 more planned by the end of the year.

Scottish & Newcastle made

the announcement yesterday, as it unveiled better-than-expected results for the six months to 27 October. Pre-tax profits rose by 26 per cent to £195m boosted by strong performances from the brewing division Scottish

Courage. The figures, which included a full contribution from last year's Courage acquisition, were supported by improved

margins on the group's main brands such as John Smith's, Theakston's and McEwans.

Scottish & Newcastle's figures were achieved in spite of another poor performance at Center Parcs where profits fell from £171m to £164m. Management said consumer confidence was improving in some countries such as Germany

which was helping bookings. Brian Stewart, chief executive, denied the division was for sale but said: "Everything is for sale at a price."

Scottish & Newcastle's group sales were 24 per cent higher at £1.66bn in the period. The shares reacted positively, rising 22p to 661p.

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Sears to raise cash through Freemans sale

Patrick Toohy

Sears, the sprawling retail group, yesterday confirmed it was in early-stage talks with several parties to sell Freemans, Britain's third-largest mail order business, in a move that could pave the way for surplus cash to be returned to long-suffering shareholders.

"If there is an opportunity for Sears to sell Freemans or collaborate with a third party, then clearly it is something we will consider," Liam Strong, Sears' chief executive, said.

The talks, described by Mr Strong as being preliminary and "exploratory", are understood to be with all of Freemans' main rivals in the mail-order business. These include Great Universal Stores, the market leader and Littlewoods.

"Sears has believed for some time that consolidation within the mail-order market would result in benefits for customers, suppliers and industry participants," Mr Strong continued, adding that a further announcement would be made if anything emerged from the preliminary discussions.

Offers for Freemans, which made profits of £38m on sales of £531m in the year to January 1996, are thought to be in the £350m region.

News that Sears is cash-raising talks will also encourage hopes that it is serious about paying back a substantial amount of money to its shareholders, possibly in the form of a special dividend.

Last month, after Sears raised £80m from the sale of the St Enoch shopping centre in



Reviewing options: Liam Strong wants cash returned

Glasgow, Mr Strong said: "In the light of the group's cash resources, the board will be reviewing options available for returning any surplus cash to shareholders."

However, news of the Freeman talks failed to impress the City, and the shares closed 0.5p lower at 92.5p.

Freemans operates at the agency end of the mail-order business, where agents receive commission on sales. Analysts say this business is in long-term decline as the direct-mail order market expands.

Mr Strong has been under renewed pressure to placate shareholders since September when Sears revealed interim profits had collapsed from £20m to just £2.5m after taking a £25m provision against exposure to shoe shops sold to Stephen Hinchcliffe's failed Falcia group. Apart from Selfridges, the flagship London department store, all other divisions reported lower profits.

Emap's dissident directors voted out

Nigel Cope

The long-running boardroom bust-up at Emap, the media group, finally drew to an untidy close yesterday when shareholders voted overwhelmingly to oust two "dissident" non-executive directors who had contested changes to the company's articles of association.

However, the dispute remained a bitter one to the end with the two-and-a-half hour emergency general meeting in central London marred by personal insults and ill-temper.

Sir John Hoskyns, Emap's chairman and Robin Miller,

chief executive, were variously accused by shareholders of "double standards", "unethical behaviour" and of conducting personal vendettas. Mr Miller, who maintained a silence throughout, was accused of being "power seeking".

Their behaviour was compared to that of Boris Yeltsin's removal of dissenting voices from his cabinet.

The two directors, Professor Ken Simmonds and Joe Cooke,

were eventually outvoted by a majority of three to one by a show of hands. When Anne Simpson of Pirc, the corporate governance lobby group, called for a

poll, including proxies, it showed 109 million votes in favour of the pair's removal while 12 million voted against. There are 207 million shares in issue.

Sir John Hoskyns told the meeting that the breakdown in relations between the board and the two dissidents was comparable and that their removal would end the row which has cast a cloud over Emap's share price. "I am confident that with these two resolutions passed, the board will be fully united and ready to give full attention to your company's business."

The row centred on a change of articles approved by an an-

nual meeting in July. These removed a provision to retain at least five non-executive directors and enabled a director to be ousted if three-quarters of the board voted in favour.

At yesterday's meeting, which was attended by more than 100 shareholders, both Professor Simmonds and Mr Cooke delivered lengthy statements on their objections to the changes. Professor Simmonds said non-executives should have an overriding responsibility to speak out when it was in shareholders' interests. He warned that the board should not fall under the control of any one person. Quot-

ing philosopher Sir Edmund Burke, he said: "For evil to triumph it only requires enough good men to do nothing."

He claimed the dissidents' struggle was a "David and Goliath" affair with himself and Mr Cooke pitched against Emap's "well-oiled PR machine".

He said the board should address the succession question as Sir John is due to step down as chairman in 1998 and appoint non-executive directors who were not executive directors of other companies.

Mr Cooke accused Sir John and Mr Miller of conducting the corporate equivalent of a three

line whip to get the board to agree the article changes.

Mr Cooke closed by saying: "The chairman and chief executive who pushed through these changes should not be left in charge of Emap much longer."

After both rebel directors had been tackled by shareholders for taking too long over their statements Anne Simpson of Pirc called for a poll and said: "It's very sad what has happened at Emap. But the good thing is that the decision is being made by shareholders."

Emap shares closed 5p higher at 735p.

Comment, page 19

Courtaulds Textiles sells last spinning mills

Chris Godsmark
Business Correspondent

Another chapter in the long shake-out of the British textile trade came to a close yesterday when Courtaulds Textiles sold off the last of its spinning mills.

Courtaulds Textiles, the business formed after the Courtaulds empire split its chemicals and clothing businesses in a demerger six years ago, is selling the two mills in Bolton and Oldham to Shiloh, a long-established quoted textiles and healthcare company also based in Oldham.

The deal marks the end of a dramatic decline in Courtaulds' yarn spinning businesses, which as recently as 1988 employed 5,500 people in more than 30 mills in the UK. Earlier this year it closed two other mills in Atherton, Manchester and

Wolenden in Bolton, which together employed 300 people.

Just 500 jobs are left in the two remaining mills, and last night Edmund Gurside, chairman of Shiloh, said the deal would be secured as a result of the sale.

"We've not bought it to cannibalise it, we've bought it to run it. We're very committed to the business and it's complementary to our existing operations," he said. It will make Shiloh the largest cotton spinner in the UK with annual sales of £35m.

Stuart Banks, chief executive of Courtaulds Spinning, will also transfer to Shiloh. He said: "It's obviously sad for Courtaulds but it's a very exciting day for the employees."

The Swan Lane Mill in Bolton is one of the largest in Britain, with 460,000 square feet of factory space organised

on six floors. It was once part of a complex of three mills, which still dominate the surrounding skyline, though the other two were closed long ago.

Shiloh is paying just over £4m for the mills which Courtaulds pointed out had an asset value of £5m. They made profits last year of £800,000 and are on course this year to increase this to £1m. Courtaulds bought Swan Lane in 1974 and has invested heavily there in the past 10 years, spending around £5m in new computerised machinery in 1989.

However under the leadership of Martin Taylor, now chief executive of Barclays Bank, the Textiles business turned its sights towards the clothing business. It is now a large supplier of underwear to Marks and Spencer.

RECs win six-month delay to full competition

Michael Harrison

The introduction of full competition into the domestic electricity market is to be delayed for at least six months after an intense lobbying campaign by the industry.

The delay means that Britain's 23 million domestic electricity suppliers will not all be able to shop around among different suppliers until the autumn of 1998 and perhaps even later.

Professor Stephen Littlechild, the industry regulator, announced yesterday that competition would be phased in from 1 April, 1998 based on postal codes. Initially, only 10 per cent of customers will be allowed to switch supplier when the market is liberalised.

A further 15 per cent of households or some 3.5 million customers nationally will be able

to shop around from the end of May. A third phase of liberalisation, covering another 25 per cent of customers, will be phased in towards the end of July.

But the remaining 50 per cent of the market - accounting for more than 11 million households - will not be able to switch suppliers until mid-September.

The regional electricity companies (RECs) had proposed that the changeover be phased in over 18 months because of the huge logistical and technological problems posed by giving 23 million customers commercial freedom from day one.

Professor Littlechild has rejected this but he also said it would be necessary to monitor the situation closely. "If any significant problems arise it would be possible to delay or reduce the size of subsequent phases."

The first phase of liberalisation

covering an initial 2 million customers will include all non-domestic consumers in the below 100 kilowatt market such as retailers and small businesses, those with half-hourly metering and those with multiple sites.

Eastern Group, Britain's highest electricity distributor with 3 million customers, said: "We are pleased with the controlled market start up, the method of using post codes and the inclusion of all small businesses within the first phase."

Brian Staples, chief executive of United Utilities, the electricity and water supplier for the North-west, has put the costs of preparing the market for liberalisation at £1bn. The company is spearheading a campaign to persuade Professor Littlechild to take these costs into account in setting his next set of price controls.

Two ex-MTM bosses convicted of fraud

Jill Treanor

Two former executives of MTM, once the UK's second-highest fine chemicals firm, were convicted yesterday at the Old Bailey on fraud charges brought by the Serious Fraud Office and the North Yorkshire Police Fraud Squad.

Richard Lines, 60, former chairman and a founder of MTM, was convicted of two offences of conspiring to account falsely and one offence of making misleading, false or deceptive statements.

Thomas Baxter, 45, the com-

pany's former finance director, was convicted of one count of conspiracy to account falsely and another of making misleading, false or deceptive statements.

He was acquitted on a further account of conspiring to account falsely. Sentencing was deferred.

During the trial, which started in June, Vivian Robinson, for the SFO said: "Lines and Baxter, assisted by others, cooked the books in order to give the impression that the company was a good deal more profitable than it was, in fact, the case."

STOCK MARKETS					
Index	Close	Day's change	Change (%)	1996 High	1996 Low
FTSE 100	4038.90	-19.50	-0.5	4073.10	3932.30
FTSE 250	4114.00	-13.70	-0.3	4068.00	4015.30
FTSE 350	2005.20	-9.00	-0.4	2022.10	1916.00
FTSE SmallCap	2159.90	-1.60	-0.1	2244.36	1954.08
FTSE All-Share	1975.89	-9.28	-0.4	1994.54	1791.95
New York	6481.83	-39.07	-0.6	6547.79	6032.94
Tokyo	20674.69	-345.67	-1.6	22666.80	19734.70
Hong Kong	13517.56	+123.63	+0.9	13530.95	10204.87
Frankfurt	2858.60	+13.08	+0.5	2854.80	2283.36

Source: FT Information

INTEREST RATES					
Short sterling	UK medium gov	US long bond	3 Month	6 Month	12 Month
5.50	6.50	6.50	5.50	6.50	6.50
5.50	6.50	6.50	5.50	6.50	6.50
5.50	6.50	6.50	5.50	6.50	6.50
5.50	6.50	6.50	5.50	6.50	6.50
5.50	6.50	6.50	5.50	6.50	6.50

CURRENCIES					
£/\$	£/DM	£/¥	£/A\$	£/NZ\$	£/HK\$
1.5445	1.5445	1.5445	1.5445	1.5445	1.5445
1.5445	1.5445	1.5445	1.5445	1.5445	1.5445
1.5445	1.5445	1.5445	1.5445	1.5445	1.5445
1.5445	1.5445	1.5445	1.5445	1.5445	1.5445
1.5445	1.5445	1.5445	1.5445	1.5445	1.5445

OTHER INDICATORS					
Index	Value	Change	Year Ago	Index	Value
Oil Brent	22.00	+0.12	17.38	RPI	153.8+2.7pc 149.7
Gold \$	370.85	-0.80	386.30	GDP	108.9+2.3pc 105.7
Gold £	220.13	-0.93	251.91	Base Rates	6.00pc 6.75

مركز الاموال

business

Courage gives S&N a boost

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY MAGNUS GRIMOND

With the beer industry braced for an imminent OFT decision on the proposed takeover of Carlsberg by Bass, Scottish & Newcastle yesterday kicked off a busy week for Britain's brewers with a better-than-expected set of half-year figures.

Pre-tax profits were 26 per cent higher at 195m, helped by a full six-month contribution from last year's Courage deal. But what impressed the market most was S&N's ability to grow earnings per share by 18 per cent in a year when one of its main businesses - Center Parcs - again turned in a poor performance. Profits there were down 25m, hit by the economic problems of northern Europe as well as one-off costs in the Benelux countries and £1m of redundancy charges.

S&N chief executive Brian Stewart denies that Center Parcs is a concept that has peaked and points to UK occupancy rates of 91 per cent and rising spend per head figures both in the UK and Europe. However, speculation continues that the business may be sold, although a float of the continental Center Parcs is another possibility.

The division which wrong-footed analysts was brewing, where the re-named Scottish Courage business

improved profits by a better-than-expected 67 per cent to £90m. S&N has been building margins rather than chasing sales with its stable of brands, which include Theakston's, John Smith's and McEwan's. Some £18m of costs have been taken out so far, with £45m planned for the full year.

With the economy improving in the South of England faster than in the North, management admits these results would not have looked as good without the Courage deal.

In retailing, S&N lags behind Whitbread in the development of themed pubs and restaurants. However, it is starting to motor with 35 Chef & Brewer, pub-restaurants planned for this year and an eventual target of 150. Another format earmarked for roll-out is Barras & Co, the community pub brand started earlier this year.

With a forward price-earnings of 14, assuming full-year profits hit £380m, S&N shares are trading at a discount to rivals such as Whit-

bread and Bass, the latter of which reports later this week. S&N shares jumped 22p to 661p yesterday and would rise further if management can demonstrate that Center Parcs is on the mend. A strong hold.

Ascot head is worth backing

Ascot Holdings' pedigree is hardly of the sort to inspire confidence. Better known in its old guise as Control Securities, the one-time pubs to hotels group was formerly the vehicle of disgraced businessman Nazim Virani. Not content with its own colourful past, this summer Ascot paid £290m for Suter, the mini-conglomerate whose name is synonymous with that of its controversial chairman, David Abell.

But if anyone is going to help Ascot escape its history, it is chairman and chief executive Howard

Dyer, who is credited with turning round Hamleys, the toyshop group.

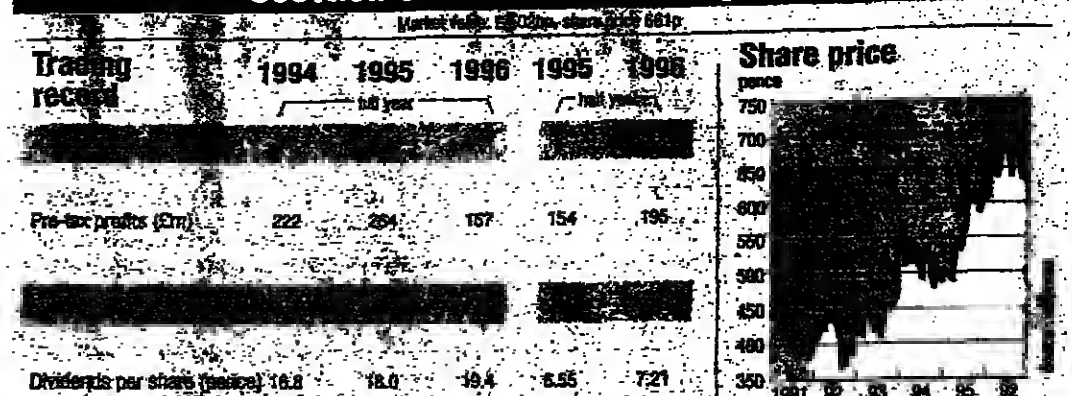
Mr Dyer is busy turning Ascot on its head, so yesterday's interim results showing pre-tax profits sliding from £8.8m to £1.2m in the six months to September are pretty meaningless as a guide to the future. The figures reflect a divestment programme which has seen the group raise over £200m from disposals since Mr Dyer's arrival in 1991. He expects to raise close to £40m more over the next two years from selling most of the former Control assets of pubs and other properties.

That will all be needed, as gearing has soared to 244 per cent since the Suter acquisition. But Mr Dyer is confident of paying that down easily within a two to three-year timetable mainly through the disposal of two of Suter's four divisions.

Specialist engineering will definitely be kept. The Searle refrigeration equipment business and Floform spark plug electrode operations both have strong market shares. Chemicals also looks safe.

That leaves the automotive arm and a rag-bag ranging from drills to beauty care mostly likely to be on the block early next year. Profits of £28m next year,

Scottish & Newcastle : at a glance



assuming no Suter disposals, would put the shares, up 1.5p at 326.5p, on a forward p/e ratio of 14. Worth backing the man, even if it may be a while before a clear picture of the business emerges.

BTG's patent potential

Shares in BTG, the old British Technology Group, have been among the best performers on the stock market in the last year, rising from a low of 70p to last night's £24.375p.

Ownership of potentially lucrative patents lies behind the shares rise. BTG patents whacky inventions and licences the intellectual property rights to big groups like Zeneca and SmithKline Beecham and biotech companies, including Peptide Therapeutics, and earns royalties in return.

BTG currently owns over 9,000 patents but the most exciting prospect is Torotrak, a fuel-saving variable transmission system developed in-house and licensed to nine vehicle manufacturers, including Ford and Toyota. Ultimately Torotrak could replace cars' gearbox system, making for a lighter, more fuel efficient system with fewer moving parts.

Japanese investment bank Yamachi reckons Torotrak could be worth up to £1bn, compared with BTG's current market value of £427m.

In the meantime, a final payment estimated at £2m for BTG's Pyrethrin crop protection insecticide allowed the group to post interim pre-tax profits of £170,000 versus a £2.1m loss a year ago, though BTG is cautious about whether it will remain in the black for the full year.

A proposed one-for-five share split should improve marketability. Yamachi's estimated net present value ranges from £400m to £3bn, implying a share price potential of up to £170. Interesting, but speculative.

Rank passes up Trump deal

Magnus Grimond

Rank, the Mecca bingo halls to Butlin's holidays group, yesterday pulled out of talks to invest \$50m (£30m) in Donald Trump's Castle casino in Atlantic City, New Jersey.

The plan, unveiled in October, was to redecorate the casino to give it the theme of the Hard Rock chain of hamburger restaurants, which Rank bought out entirely in a £270m deal in June. Rank's shares fell 9.5p to 425.5p yesterday.

Trump's Castle, part of the leisure empire which is spearheading a comeback for the eponymous former property tycoon, was to have been converted into a Hard Rock Casino Hotel, with the British group sharing in some of the profits. But Rank, where Andrew Teare, formerly of English China Clay, took the helm in April, said it now regarded the potential returns on the proposed investment as "inadequate".

A Rank spokeswoman said: "We explored the possibility of rebranding Trump Castle with Hard Rock branding, but having explored it fully, frankly the returns as we perceived it just weren't going to meet our criteria." She said there were no plans to reopen the talks.

Trump Hotels & Casino Resorts had earlier announced the termination of discussions in New York. The group said, however, that it retained exclusive, long-term restrictive covenants for themed restaurants, entertainment venues and casinos by Hard Rock Cafe International in the Atlantic City market. These "covenants" were included in the agreement which established the Hard Rock Cafe and merchandise store in the Trump Taj Mahal in Atlantic City. Other possible themes for Trump's Castle have been pursued, the company said. It refused to elaborate on what these were, but a decision is expected shortly.

IN BRIEF

• International equity placings rose to a record \$39.4bn (£23.4bn) in the first nine months of the year, up from \$22.4bn in the same period last year, the OECD said. The January to September total was unprecedented and evidence of bullish stock markets. It said in a report on financial market trends. The share of privatisations rose to \$8.5bn, from \$6.7bn a year earlier, representing 21.6 per cent of the total, after 29.9 per cent last year. The US accounted for \$5.5bn, up from \$4.4bn a year earlier. Sweden for \$4.1bn, up from \$4.0bn, the UK for \$3.6bn, up from \$1.6bn, Italy for \$1.8bn, up from \$0.1bn, France for \$1.7bn, down from \$1.9bn and Germany for \$1.3bn, up from \$1.1bn.

• The Stock Exchange's Alternative Investment Market received a boost when the Inland Revenue announced a capital gains tax clearance scheme that should help make it more attractive to investors. In future, AIM companies will be able to approach the Inland Revenue for a ruling in advance on whether their shares will qualify for capital gains tax reinvestment relief. This relief allows investors to defer their CGT liabilities if they reinvest in a qualifying company. Until now there has been considerable uncertainty about whether individual AIM shares are eligible, mainly because ownership of a foreign subsidiary may disqualify a company's shares. This rule has been relaxed so companies qualify if the majority of their business is in the UK.

• UK Active Value, the fund which owns 9 per cent of Kenwood, said it would be happy to recommend a paper offer for the household appliances group from the much smaller Pifco, "assuming it was at an appropriate level". The fund was reacting to reports that Pifco was seeking to buy Kenwood, which has been under siege from rebel shareholders. UK Active Value has already called for an extraordinary general meeting on 16 December to consider seeking offers for the company.

• P&O Containers and Nedlloyd Lines have signed an agreement for a \$1bn (£595m) credit facility. It will provide finance for P&O Nedlloyd Container Line, which will be formed from the merger of the container businesses of The Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation and Royal Nedlloyd Group NV. "The facility will fund P&O Nedlloyd's initial borrowings and the company's working capital requirements," P&O Containers said.

• Paribas, a French bank, is moving its Spanish bond trading activities to London from Madrid although corporate bond business will continue to be run from the Spanish capital. The team of government bond and "repo" traders will report to Stefano Paschetto, co-head of European bond sales, who will co-ordinate the bank's sales activities in Italy, Spain and Portugal. "The move reflects the growing internationalisation of the Spanish market and an increasing interest by Paribas' overseas clients in Spain," the bank said.

Company Results

	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EPS	Dividend
Acad (Q)	72.5m (61.8m)	4.85m (4.45m)	14.2p (13p)	3.15p (2.75p)
Alcan (Q)	71.1m (54.3m)	4.72m (3.9m)	8.77p (7.3p)	2.8p (2.5p)
Amey Holdings (Q)	32.7m (33.5m)	1.2m (0.8m)	4.8p (3.5p)	nil (nil)
BT (Q)	12.1m (8.8m)	0.17m (0.10m)	0.03p (0.02p)	nil (nil)
BTG (Q)	200m (160m)	23.7m (21.0m)	9.91p (9.07p)	4.05p (3.85p)
Columbus Group (Q)	10.5m (1.04m)	1.08m (0.05m)	0.41p (0.18p)	0.1p (nil)
Corussteel (Q)	54.2m (48.7m)	4.76m (4.23m)	6.75p (6.03p)	2p (nil)
CSG Inter (Q)	21.8m (21.4m)	0.38m (0.33m)	0.53p (0.46p)	nil (nil)
Ordnance (Q)	45.2m (40.5m)	3.9m (3.0m)	14.3p (11.7p)	5.6p (5p)
Rowthorn & Sons (Q)	nil	1.46m (1.31m)	7.83p (6.82p)	0.31p (0.21p)
Scottish & Newcastle (Q)	1.68m (1.34m)	195m (155m)	24.3p (20.6p)	7.21p (6.55p)
Shanks (Q)	236m (172m)	20.2m (20.8m)	5.73p (4.83p)	2.15p (2.25p)
Silva Theatre (Q)	17.2m (8.8m)	0.70m (0.47m)	4.2p (3.5p)	2.1p (nil)
Tape Industries (Q)	nil	1.21m (0.80m)	1.80p (1.72p)	0.70p (nil)
Ty Ty Ty (Q)	20.3m (22.8m)	3.65m (1.89m)	12.33p (7.18p)	3.5p (nil)
(Q) - Fiscal (Q) - Interim (Q) - Current figures pre-tax				



IT'S SIMPLER TO SEND A CARD.

If you run a small business and you'd like to say "Thank You" to your customers this Christmas, a card is the best way to get your message across.

It provides a nice personal touch that's warm and friendly without being over the top. And, unlike a business card which usually goes straight into the bottom of a drawer or

the waste-paper bin, your card will be a thoughtful reminder of your services right up to Twelfth Night.

Post your cards (using our colourful festive stamps) and

Royal Mail could help your company to have a more prosperous New Year.

A card makes everyone's Christmas.



صندوق من الاصل

market report / shares

Data Bank

FTSE 100
4038.5 -19.5

FTSE 250
4414.8 -13.7

FTSE 350
2005.2 -9.0

SEAQ VOLUME
553.6m shares,
36,991 bargains

Gilt Index
95.63 +0.26

Share spotlight

Share price index

Glaxo Wellcome

100

200

300

400

500

600

700

800

900

1000

1100

1200

1300

1400

1500

1600

1700

1800

1900

2000

2100

2200

2300

2400

2500

2600

2700

2800

2900

3000

3100

3200

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6300

6400

6500

6600

6700

6800

6900

7000

7100

7200

7300

7400

Sterling performance by pound leaves Footsie wilting

Taking Stock

MARKET REPORT

DEREK PAIN

stock market reporter of the year



It was as if the fates conspired to ensure the stock market started the Christmas month in a decidedly miserable mood.

Fears of another base rate increase, underlined by Abbey National's move, an even more rampant sterling and a dull New York display were just three of the inhibiting influences.

The Rascal Electronics debacle, real and rumoured profit downgradings and a temptation to lock in some profits also gnawed at shares.

Footsie, in thin trading, ended 19.5 points lower at 4,038.5 points. Second- and third-liners also wilted.

The Abbey decision unsettled building and related shares as fears grew that higher mortgage rates could choke off the still hesitant housing revival.

But Abbey revelled in the change, gaining 12.5p to 709p, a high.

Glaxo Wellcome was one

under the whip of rumoured forecast cuts.

There was talk a leading US securities house had decided the shares were too high and deserved to be nearer 80p. It was enough to clip the price 8.5p to 970p.

Hanson, now moving into the final throes of its painful demerger, fell 2.5p to 71.5p as NatWest Securities stuck an 81p valuation on what remains of the once powerful conglomerate.

The reduction stemmed in part from lower values for building material shares here and in the US.

Storehouse found yet a new 12-month low as the Barclays de Zoete Wedd sell advice continued to weigh heavily. But NatWest remains bullish. It believes the growth of overseas franchise operations has been overlooked. The shares fell 5p to 256.5p. Burton gained 2.2p to 151p with MeePier-

son suggesting an 180p target. Rascal fused 50p to 222p and Beristford International, the kitchens and bathrooms group, tumbled 9p to 135p with the mystery bidder backing away. Courtlands slipped 3p to 397p as the chemical group's Footsie place looked increasingly vulnerable.

Pilkington, another likely Footsie casualty, managed a 3.5p gain to 152p, on hopes of lower German interest rates.

Scottish & Newcastle, the brewing group, was the best performing blue chip, gaining 2p to 661p as interim figures came in ahead of most expectations. Bass, year's figures to-morrow, rose 10.5p to 794p.

Utilities threw off the lethargy as takeover hopes flickered again. London Electricity rose 11.5p to 657.5p and Yorkshire 5.5p to 764p. There were also ripples in the water sector with Severn Trent up 6.5p to 660.5p.

Simple Cochrane, an engineering services group, could have chosen a better day to make its debut. In the event it still managed a healthy premium, closing at 218.5p from a 180p placing.

On Demand Information, an electronic publisher, managed an 8p gain to 47.5p as the company said it knew of no reason for the share price decline. The shares were around 140p two

months ago. Verson International, an engineer, which announced a near £5.8m loss late on Friday, fell 2.5p to 14p. Clubpartners International, a golf group, bunkered itself, falling 6p to 13.5p after disclosing it had received takeover bids at below the market price. The shares were 33p in the summer.

Wiggins, the property group, fell 0.75p to 7.25p. Chief executive Oliver Iny has made peace with his creditors over guarantees he gave over a failed property company which should remove fears he may be forced to dump shares. Wiggins intends to announce its interim figures soon.

SR Gent, the Marks & Spencer clothing supplier, jumped 8p to 64.5p. The hard-pressed group disclosed it was in bid talks in October. The sudden flurry, with one deal of 25,000 shares going through at 67p just before the market

closed, could indicate a deal has been sewn up.

It is understood that more than possible buyer has been talking to the company which had to make a £14m write off on the closure of its Clothing Barn retail chain. The failure, the group's second retailing disaster, forced it into crisis talks with its bankers.

In the past year Gent's shares have been as high as 94p. They were floated through a tender offer in 1984 - the strike price was 184p. Lamont, another textile group which has found the going tough, was 2.5p higher at 186.5p on vague talk of a Dutch bid. The shares have come down from 324p in the summer.

Kenwood Appliances, the kitchen equipment group, is another where a bidder hovers. The shares jumped 13.5p to 233.5p with Pico said to be the most likely bidder.

Q H Young, distributing such lines as Head sports clothes and Magic Tree air fresheners, is adding cycle parts. It is paying £6.96m for Madison, which sells cycle accessories.

As part of the deal, Young is raising £5.75m through a placing and an open offer on a one-for-three ratio at 116p. Young's profits last year were up 30 per cent at £2.6m and the enlarged group could hit £4m this year. The shares fell 6.5p to 125p.

Q Red faces at Ellis & Co. The stockbroker distributed four copies of a draft note on Corporate Executive Search, saying the company had achieved half-year turnover of £1.23m.

But CES accounts have still to be finalised and Ellis has asked that the "rogue notes" should be disregarded. CES shares held at 4.5p.

Share Price Data

Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is last year's dividend, grossed up by 20 per cent, as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the share price divided by last year's earnings per share, excluding exceptional items. Other details: r Ex rights x Ex-dividend x Ex all x Unlisted Securities Market x Suspended x Partly Paid pm 14 Paid Shares, 4 AM Stock. Source: FT Information

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UK Stock Market Report 01 Better Report 05 Water Shares 07
UK Company News 02 Wall St Report 20 Electricity Shares 40
Foreign Exchange 03 Tokyo Market 21 High Street Banks 41

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Calls cost 50p per minute (pennies), 40p per minute at all other times. Call charges include

Market leaders: Top 20 volumes

Stock	Volume	Stock	Volume	Stock	Volume	Stock	Volume
ASDA Group	930000	Heron	600000	Midland	50000	BT	300000
BT	900000	Sainsbury	600000	QinetiQ	40000	TSA	300000
Shell	700000	Scotiabank	500000	BT	40000	BT	300000
Lloyds TSB	700000	Burns	400000	Reliance	40000	Midland & Spencer	300000
British Gas	600000	Scotstave	300000	BT	30000	Stora	300000

FTSE 100 index hour by hour

Open	4038.50	Down	21	11.00	4038.50	Down	74	14.00	4038.50	Down	130
09.00	4048.17	Down	93	12.00	4044.44	Down	136	15.00	4037.50	Down	205
10.00	4048.68	Down	84	13.00	4045.33	Down	127	16.00	4038.50	Down	195

Telecommunications

Stock	Price	Change	Stock	Price	Change	Stock	Price	Change
ASDA Group	10.00	+0.10	BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05
BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05
BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05
BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05

Textiles & Apparel

Stock	Price	Change	Stock	Price	Change	Stock	Price	Change
ASDA Group	10.00	+0.10	BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05
BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05
BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05
BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05

Retailers, Food

Stock	Price	Change	Stock	Price	Change	Stock	Price	Change
ASDA Group	10.00	+0.10	BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05
BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05
BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05
BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05

Retailers, General

Stock	Price	Change	Stock	Price	Change	Stock	Price	Change
ASDA Group	10.00	+0.10	BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05
BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05
BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05
BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05

Pharmaceuticals

Stock	Price	Change	Stock	Price	Change	Stock	Price	Change
ASDA Group	10.00	+0.10	BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05
BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05
BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05
BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05

Printing & Paper

Stock	Price	Change	Stock	Price	Change	Stock	Price	Change
ASDA Group	10.00	+0.10	BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05
BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05
BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05
BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05

Property

Stock	Price	Change	Stock	Price	Change	Stock	Price	Change
ASDA Group	10.00	+0.10	BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05
BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05
BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05
BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05

Support Services

Stock	Price	Change	Stock	Price	Change	Stock	Price	Change
ASDA Group	10.00	+0.10	BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05
BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05
BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05
BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05

Rights Issues

Stock	Price	Change	Stock	Price	Change	Stock	Price	Change
ASDA Group	10.00	+0.10	BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05
BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05
BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05
BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05

Recent Issues

Stock	Price	Change	Stock	Price	Change	Stock	Price	Change
ASDA Group	10.00	+0.10	BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05
BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05
BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05
BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05	BT	1.00	+0.05

Government Securities

1985	MTI Tech Inc	55	55	Veran Group	63 3/8		
1986	Mobac	4	4 1/2				
1987	Morgan	17 1/2	17 1/2				
1988	Morgan	17 1/2	17 1/2				
1989	McDonald Inc	30	30 1/2				
1990	McDonald Inc	30	30 1/2				
1991	McDonald Inc	30	30 1/2				
1992	McDonald Inc	30	30 1/2				
1993	McDonald Inc	30	30 1/2				
1994	McDonald Inc	30	30 1/2				
1995	McDonald Inc	30	30 1/2				
1996	McDonald Inc	30	30 1/2				
1997	McDonald Inc	30	30 1/2				
1998	McDonald Inc	30	30 1/2				
1999	McDonald Inc	30	30 1/2				
2000	McDonald Inc	30	30 1/2				
2001	McDonald Inc	30	30 1/2				
2002	McDonald Inc	30	30 1/2				
2003	McDonald Inc	30	30 1/2				
2004	McDonald Inc	30	30 1/2				
2005	McDonald Inc	30	30 1/2				
2006	McDonald Inc	30	30 1/2				
2007	McDonald Inc	30	30 1/2				
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2009	McDonald Inc	30	30 1/2				
2010	McDonald Inc	30	30 1/2				
2011	McDonald Inc	30	30 1/2				
2012	McDonald Inc	30	30 1/2				
2013	McDonald Inc	30	30 1/2				
2014	McDonald Inc	30	30 1/2				
2015	McDonald Inc	30	30 1/2				
2016	McDonald Inc	30	30 1/2				
2017	McDonald Inc	30	30 1/2				
2018	McDonald Inc	30	30 1/2				
2019	McDonald Inc	30	30 1/2				
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Mulligan gets top school report

Racing
JOHN COBB

There has been nothing wrong with the jumps season so far, but it is about to get even better. On Saturday, two of the brightest and best return to the stage: Viking Flagship at Sandown and Mr Mulligan at Cheltenham. There will be no Tiole Creek - who died earlier this year - to lead out the runners for the Sandown chase that bears his name, but the reappearance of Viking Flagship in this race is becoming a similarly warming tradition.

This is the event that has been used to launch Viking Flagship for the last two years on campaigns that have yielded seven successes at the highest level. The former champion two-miler was dethroned by Kiaran Davis at Cheltenham last season, and Arthur Moore's gelding is among the list of six opponents declared to take on Viking Flagship on Saturday.

But David Nicholson's horse took his revenge in the Melling Chase at Aintree and, although some have suggested that the speed to take on the best at two miles has been blunted, one could question his trademark toughness and durability.

With Mr Mulligan different qualities come to mind. This is the spectacular chestnut with the compellingly beautiful, blond mane and a dramatic front-running style that brought five straight wins last year. With those successes came a more dubious honour, that of being most people's idea of a Cheltenham Festival banker. There, of course, the beautiful dream was shattered by Mr Mulligan's rooted first fence and trail in second behind Nairn Lad in the Sun Alliance Chase.

The experience has not shaken him and there is plenty of stable confidence that the Cheltenham Gold Cup aspirant can make a winning return. "The horse is jumping out of his skin," Noel Chance, his

trainer, said yesterday. "My only problem is the jockey, but it's a major problem."

Mr Mulligan's regular rider, Richard Johnson, has a broken collar-bone, and the man that Chance wants to replace him, Mick Fitzgerald, may be required to ride for Nick Henderson at Sandown.

RICHARD EDMONDSON
NAP: Plum First (Southwell 11.40)
NB: The Lancer (Newtown 12.20)

Unsurprisingly, Fitzgerald is also laming out this time of events. "I'm retained by Mr Henderson, so it looks as though I will be required to be at Sandown," he said yesterday. "It'd be a shame."

"I'm very lucky to have a very good job with Mr Henderson and you can't have your head buried under a stone."

What particularly concerns Chance is that time is running

out if a new partner is to have a getting-to-know-you session with Mr Mulligan. It is a process that would not have been necessary with Fitzgerald.

"I schooled him before the [abandoned] Feltham Chase at Kempton last Christmas and he jumped well, but you could tell he was a novice. When I schooled him last Sunday he jumped like an old hand, very sure-footed, very neat. I could really feel the difference."

Fitzgerald is developing a name as a rider who can be called upon to do a reliable job on the big occasion. It is a role that he clearly relishes and one which he has worked for by making himself available for schooling duties across the country.

His diary last week provides a typical profile of his carefully worked schedule. On Wednesday he was in Somerset, exercising a possible Hennessy mount in Paul Nicholls's Belmont King. He eventually rode Chance's Midnight Caller in

that race and when he called back at Lambourn trainer's base for the Mr Mulligan work on Sunday it was only after having performed a similar function in Surrey on the horse that gave him his greatest day, the Grand National winner, Rough Quest.

Having missed the Hennessy, Belmont King, who joined Nicholls from Ireland with a big reputation, will meet Mr Mulligan in Saturday's Rehearsal Chase. "Belmont King will put up a bold show at Cheltenham," Fitzgerald said. "I put Rough Quest over one fence and he was in very good shape. He was as rapid and accurate as always."

"Richard Dunwoody has been in the enviable position on many occasions of having ridden a race and the top prospects for a time and he has been able to assess the capabilities of most of the runners. In Saturday's Hennessy he's ridden most of the field apart from Coome Hill. He's able to weight up options. That's a great position to be in."

RACING'S FUTURES MARKET

Bookmakers' ante-post lists are racing's futures market. Readers can catch up with the latest developments - best prices are in bold - in this space with *The Independent's* Tuesday special.

1997 Champion Hurdle: Large Action is a top-priced 8-1 with William Hill and the Tote - Ladbrokes go 5-1 - after his win at Fairyhouse. Space Truckers is 14-1 (Coral, William Hill and Tote) - Ladbrokes go 10-1 - after beating Castle Sweep and Dato Star in the Fighting Hills Hurdle. Zabadi is 33-1 (Lad-

brokes) - Coral go 14-1 - after beating Urubande in the Gery Fielden Hurdle.

1997 Cheltenham Gold Cup: The Hennessy winner, Coome Hill, is 20-1 (Ladbrokes) - Coral, William Hill and the Tote go 14-1.

Ian Davies

Last week's column highlighted the subsequent Hennessy winner, Coome Hill, who was available at 10-1 with Coral (7-1 with the other leading firms) and started at 5-1.

Dolphins in the doldrums again

American football
MATT TENCH

As the Miami Dolphins cruised to victories in their first three games it was possible to believe that Jimmy Johnson was the magician the Florida faithful believed him to be during a summer long on hype but short on reality. Just then again Miami usually do well in September. By the time Thanksgiving comes around reality has usually set in, and so it has proved in Johnson's first year, as in so many of his predecessor, Don Shula.

The Dolphins were beaten 17-7 in Oakland on Sunday, a defeat that lowers their record to 6-7 and places their play-off prospects in severe jeopardy. They will probably need to win their remaining three games to earn the right to play in January, though as these include encounters with each of the New York teams that remain well within the bounds of possibility. The crucial factor will almost certainly come when they play host to Buffalo on Monday week.

Johnson has been brave to the point of foolhardy in discarding proven talent and relying on youngsters, but it was his most proven talent of all - quarterback Dan Marino - who was most a fault for the latest defeat. He threw three interceptions and fumbled the ball away. The Raiders took a grip on the game in the second quarter with touchdowns from Tim Brown and Derrick Fennell. Marino did at least a shut-out, connecting with Randall Hill with two and a half minutes remaining to end the scoreline a degree of respectability.

The New England Patriots were Miami's first victims, but after an unconvincing start their season has taken a more encouraging shape, and they lead the AFC East following a crushing win in San Diego. Drew Bledsoe threw for four touchdowns as the Patriots capitalised on five turnovers and romped home 45-7.

The Patriots share the lead of their division with Buffalo, who lost in overtime in Indianapolis, but both already know that their participation in the Super Bowl will almost certainly require victory in Denver's Mile High Stadium.

The Broncos ensured home-field advantage throughout the playoffs by beating Seattle 34-17. It was their 12th win of the season, their ninth in a row, and gave them their first AFC West title since 1991. With the best home record of any NFL team over the last decade, the Broncos are already heavy favourites to represent the AFC in the Super Bowl. And it is a measure of their current strength that they were able to thrash the Seahawks despite John Elway to play most of the game on crutches.

The New York Jets, by contrast, were able to enhance their reputation as the league's most beleaguered team. Neil O'Donnell, the quarterback expensively signed in the summer, was supposed to play for the first time in two months as the Jets entertained Houston. However O'Donnell sustained a thumb injury in the warm-up, and the match, and the Jets lost their 10th straight game in a row.

Results, standings, page 25

HYPERION	
12.30 Kemo Sabo	2.30 Uno Doug
1.00 Mr Christie	3.00 Theo Doug
1.30 Political Tower (nb)	3.30 Eireasray
2.00 Janury General	

GOING: Good (Good to Firm in places).
Left-hand end course with strong following.
Course in all, 5m 10m, Metro service to Fair Lane Road station from Newcastle railway station. Bus service from there. ADMISSION: Club £12; Tattersall £5 (01-641) Silver Ring £2. CAR PARK: Free.

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sport

France enhance cup's stature

Simon O'Hagan, in Malmö, on the toil and the joy of a tennis epic

Just before play began on the last day of the Davis Cup final in Malmö on Sunday, Brian Tobin, the benign Australian who is president of the International Tennis Federation, issued a statement headed "The Davis Cup - A Justification".

The 65-year-old Tobin was feeling aggrieved. "Malcomism", as he described them, were trying to undermine the annual, ITF-run men's team championship by suggesting that it was cluttering up the schedule of ATP tour events and Grand Slams. Among those Tobin had in mind were Andre Agassi and Pete Sampras, who have rather patronisingly tended to pick and choose when to play Davis Cup a few days previously. Sampras had upset the ITF by suggesting that it might be an idea to make it a biennial or even quadrennial affair.

Tobin duly mounted a stout defence of the competition. With 127 countries taking part in 1997, it was helping to take tennis to all corners of the globe; it was important for the development of young players, from which the ATP Tour benefited; and the tradition of an event that can trace its origins back to 1900 ought to be respected.

What Tobin omitted to refer to was the unique quality of Davis Cup tennis - the sort of tension, and scope for heroism, that as any Ryder Cup golfer will tell you only comes when individuals are doing it for the team. And never was that truer than in the incredible drama that unfolded later when France and Sweden produced unarguably the greatest final in the competition's long and illustrious history.

There could have been no more ringing justification for the Davis Cup than a match which ended with Arnaud Boetsch, having saved three match points, beating Nicklas Kulti 10-8 in the fifth set of the deciding singles to bring France a victory like no other. Never before in 84 finals had the outcome rested on the final set of the final match, and for Agassi and Sampras to regard as unworthy of their full support a competition as pure, meaningful and gripping as this can only diminish them.



France's hero: Arnaud Boetsch is borne aloft by his team-mates after the most extraordinary Davis Cup final of all time

Photograph: Eric Gaillard/Reuters

Yannick Noah, the winning captain, got it absolutely right afterwards when an elated French team came in to meet the press with the clock ticking into the early hours of Monday morning. "What I love about the Davis Cup is it's not about contracts, it's not about schedules, it's not about business," he said. "It's about the team. It's a different thing. It takes a certain character to win matches in Grand Slams, but in the Davis Cup you have to give up a lot for others. You have to sacrifice a lot of things. If people choose not to play, it's too bad. We'll just keep winning. It doesn't take anything away from us."

The feeling Noah has for the Davis Cup and the need for collective purpose was obvious

from the way he led the team to an emotional victory over the United States in Lyon in 1991, and what he achieved here was, if anything, of even greater magnitude. "The joy we feel is very special because we love competing as a group," he said. Noah must now be ripe for a sainthood.

It was "like a dream" for the 27-year-old Boetsch, who had come on court after Thomas Enqvist's wonderful recovery from two sets down to beat Cedric Pioline had returned the psychological advantage to the Swedes. "Five years ago I was in the team but I didn't play," Boetsch said. "I was supporting my friends and trying to do my best for them, and this time I was playing. It was a big honour for me, and to win this

match in this way was unbelievable."

One's heart bled for Kulti, the 25-year-old doubles player who had been drafted in after Stefan Edberg failed to recover from his twisted ankle. He was much less experienced in singles than his opponent, but he played the match of his life, and when, in the final set, Boetsch stood at 6-7 and 0-40 he was on the brink of writing his name into Swedish legend. He will be remembered anyway, not least because he was brave enough to try for outright winners on all three match points, and it was perhaps fitting that in the match that marked an ultimately frustrating farewell to the game for Edberg, the Swedes found in both Enqvist and Kulti new men to acclaim.

Henman must meet Stich

Tim Henman, the first British player to gain a place in the Grand Slam Cup since the tournament began in 1990, will have the odds stacked against him when he plays the opening match at the Olympiastadion in Munich today.

Michael Stich, the 1991 Wimbledon champion from Germany whom Henman has been drawn against in the first round, has been in Munich for the past seven days preparing for the event.

What makes Henman's task even more difficult is that Stich is not at all nervous when playing before his home crowd. He has won 18 titles on the ATP Tour and seven of them have been in Germany.

Henman has never played Stich before and at 6ft 4in, the big-serving German is particularly menacing on indoor courts and not only won the Grand Slam Cup in 1992 but was also runner-up in 1993.

Henman, however, has been outstanding during the past 12 months, having reached six ATP Tour semi-finals since January and, in reaching the last eight at Wimbledon, defeated Yevgeny Kafelnikov in the first round.

Whatever his fate today, the 22-year-old Henman is guaranteed \$100,000 (£60,864) in prize-money.

GRAND SLAM CUP (Munich): M Stich (Ger) v T Henman (GB); M Washington (US) v R Krajcek (Neth); B Becker (Ger) v J Stettenberg (Aust); J Hasek (Swe) v C Pioline (Fr); M Rostom (Sud) v J Courier (US); T Enqvist (Swe) v T Kulkar (Ind); A Agassi (US) v M Woodforde (Aus); M Taborum (Swe) v G Hantson (Aust).

Henry made to battle for championship

Snooker

Stephen Hendry achieved his first goal of the season by retaining his United Kingdom Championship at Preston's Guild Hall, winning on the final frame. Hendry, who had led John Higgins 8-4, came back from 9-8 down for a thrilling 10-9 victory in Sunday's final.

The win over his unlucky World Cup-winning team-mate put the Scot on course to emulate his clean sweep of the top three honours during 1995-96. Had he won, the 21-year-old Higgins would have become the provisional world No 1, denying Hendry top spot for only the second time in six years.

"All this talk of who is No 1 is twaddle," Hendry said. "You can only call yourself No 1 after the World Championship at the end of the season. And that's where I aim to be. But John and I are the two best players in the game. We are stretching away from the rest."

Anything other than an easy win had looked unlikely when Hendry was poised to lead 9-4 after compiling his third century of the match in the 12th frame. But from 59-20 ahead, he conceded four points after swerving to escape from a snooker, giving Higgins the chance to clear and then win the respotted black that followed.

Higgins gained confidence, taking the next four frames, and at 9-8 threatened Hendry's 17-match unbeaten record. Undeterred, Hendry made breaks of 82 and 77 to claim the final two frames in just 18 minutes.

UK CHAMPIONSHIP Final (Preston): S Hendry (Scot) bt J Higgins (Sct) 10-9. Frame scores (Hendry first): 32-72, 78-32, 105-14, 104-8, 92-29, 108-9, 102 break, 115-14, 115 break, 36-70, 4-92, 73-4, 61-33, 108-0, 110 break, 99-56, 39-68, 32-90, 29-62, 32-62, 52-0, 77-0.

Tyson tops money list

Forget those big-money contracts in baseball, basketball, American football and ice hockey. The boxer, Mike Tyson, fought just three times in 1996 and, according to *Forbes* magazine, earned \$75m (£45m), more money in one year than any athlete in history.

Tyson replaced the NBA player, Michael Jordan, at the top in the *Forbes* Super 40 list of highest-paid athletes, announced on Sunday. However, Jordan, the No 1 for four consecutive years, could be poised for a comeback in 1997. His \$30m contract - the largest one-year salary in sports history - will generate more next year. Then there is box office. Merchandise and video income from his film *Space Jam*, which could push his earnings past \$100m for next year. *Forbes* estimates Jordan's 1996 income at \$52.6m, \$12.6m in salary and \$40m from other sources such as endorsements.

Endorsement income played

a key role for many of the athletes on the list, especially in golf. Arnold Palmer is No 8 with \$15.1m, just \$100,000 of it in winnings and \$15m from other sources. Tiger Woods, a professional for just four months, earned \$800,000 playing golf and \$8m in other income.

Damon Hill, the Formula One World champion driver, does not come anywhere near the top, even though he is Britain's leading entry on the list at 34 with an estimated income of £5.5m.

Top 10 earners in sport

- 1 Mike Tyson (Boxing) \$75.0m (£45.0m)
- 2 Michael Jordan (Basketball) \$52.6m (£32.6m)
- 3 Michael Schumacher (Motor racing) \$40.0m (£25.0m)
- 4 Steve Nouri (Baseball) \$30.0m (£18.8m)
- 5 Arnold Palmer (Golf) \$15.1m (£9.4m)
- 6 Tiger Woods (Golf) \$8.0m (£5.0m)
- 7 Damon Hill (Formula One) \$5.5m (£3.4m)
- 8 Michael O'Leary (Football) \$5.0m (£3.1m)
- 9 Andre Agassi (Tennis) \$4.0m (£2.5m)
- 10 Andrei Chirkes (Football) \$3.0m (£1.9m)

Source: *Forbes* magazine

Wycombe's reward

Hockey

BILL COLWILL

High Wycombe's Hockey Association Cup defeat of the mighty Doncaster on their own ground has been rewarded with a fifth-round home tie against Reddington.

Reddington will not relish the thought of a visit to Cresswell, remembering their last trip there in the Cup two years ago when they required a penalty-stroke barrage to silence the Nastro Azzurro South side.

The Cup holders, Reading, who have been struggling in recent games, will also have reservations about their visit to the First Division leaders, Beeston

Rugby viewers let down by BBC coverage

The BBC did not broadcast the opening and often fascinating matches of the Heineken European Cup. It could have but chose not to. Independent television had originally acquired the rights to these matches but then had second thoughts. The BBC could have intervened at this stage and picked up the contract but decided against.

There were protests in which I joined in this column and which, for once, seemed to have some effect. The corporation appears to have realised that it made a mistake. It promises to cover the semi-finals, Brive v Cardiff and Leicester v Toulouse, and to broadcast the final in the new year.

Last weekend saw a further example of the BBC's treatment of rugby followers as poor relations. True, there was full coverage of England v New Zealand Barbarians at Twickenham on BBC1. But on the next day Wales played Australia at Cardiff. The match was seen on television in Wales but not in England or Scotland.

There were numerous people in both these countries who would have liked to see it: the more so as David Campese was making his last appearance for Australia and Jonathan Davies his first for Wales since his return from rugby league. Indeed, the spectacle of Davies in a Welsh union jersey once again was something most of us had never expected to see. Hence the match was not only interesting in itself: it was also a romantic occasion.

All the BBC did was devote roughly a third of *Rugby Special* to it, the other part of the programme being taken up with France v South Africa and England v New Zealand Barbarians. Yet the majority of English viewers would, I am sure, fall into one of three categories: they would have been at Twickenham; viewed the match live on television; or taped it and watched it later, on Saturday evening, Sunday morning or Sunday afternoon. Besides, those who had been at the ground or watched it live on television might well have recorded it also for future reference or entertainment.

This argument against *Rugby Special*'s indolent habit of running highlights of matches which most fans have already either seen or recorded is one of general application. It has, however, an additional force when a game of equal interest to Saturday's is taking place on a Sunday.

I do not see why BBC1 or BBC2 should not have arranged its programming to broadcast Wales v Australia in England and Scotland. In the event of that, there could have been an extended *Rugby Spe-*



ALAN WATKINS

cial. Even at its normal hour's length, the programme could have given us nearly 70 per cent of an event which did, after all, happen on the day the programme went out.

Nor is it only the BBC that may be short-changing its rugby-watching customers. I wonder about the Rugby Football Union as well. Last week I was taken as a guest to that body's 125th anniversary dinner, held at Twickenham. The after-dinner speakers were Jeff Probyn and David Mellor, MP. Both made accomplished and funny speeches. Probyn's was slightly funnier.

But why was Mellor there at all? He is, as we know, a Chelsea supporter. These are troubled and interesting times for rugby supporters. Could not the RFU have rustled up someone - say, one of its own members, in addition to Probyn - who could have told us what was going on? It may be that the RFU does not know what is going on. Even so, the last person in England that most of those present wanted to hear was, I suspect, David Mellor.

Perhaps the most interesting part of the evening was the competition (entry fee £10) to choose a Lions XV from the period 1971-89. There was a prize for whoever came nearest to Probyn's selection. This turned out to be:

J Williams; G Davies; J Guscott; M Gibson; D Duckham; B John; G Edwards; F Cotton; P Wheeler; G Price; P Ackford; W J McBride; R Utley; D Richards; P Winterbottom.

My host, Donald Treford, formerly editor of the *Observer*, and now sports columnist of the *Daily Telegraph*, got 12. Some low types had managed 13 and divided the prize. Treford put in John Dawes, Wade Dooley and Mervyn Davies instead of Jeremy Guscott, Paul Ackford and Dean Richards. I got 12 as well. I put in Dawes, Derek Quinell and Davies instead of Guscott, Utley and Richards.

In short, we agreed that Dawes and Davies should be included rather than Probyn's choices of Guscott and Richards. Interestingly enough, these two players are still performing weekly. If they are given the chance, and both are considered not to be good enough to be in the current England team.

No problems for Tyrrell on Verstappen

Motor racing

Tyrrell made it clear yesterday that there were no problems with their new signing, the Dutchman Jos Verstappen, despite his absence from the official entry list for next year's Formula One World Championship.

"We think the problem was just down to timing," a team spokesman, Rupert Manwaring, said. "We signed Jos late on Thursday night and he will definitely be our driver next year. His absence may just be because the list was put together before we announced him."

There were no surprises in the 24-strong list, released in Paris by the FIA, the international governing body of motor sport, which confirmed vacant seats at the Jordan, Ligier, Minardi and Lola teams.

Those four teams have until 9 March, the day before practice begins for the Australian Grand Prix, to nominate their drivers.

Formula One World Championship entry list

- 1 Damon Hill (GB) Arrows
- 2 Pedro Diniz (Bra) Arrows
- 3 Jacques Villeneuve (Can) Williams
- 4 Heinz-Harald Frentzen (Ger) Williams
- 5 Michael Schumacher (Ger) Ferrari
- 6 Eddie Irvine (GB) Ferrari
- 7 Jean Alesi (Fr) Benetton
- 8 Gerhard Berger (Aust) Benetton
- 9 Mika Hakkinen (Fin) McLaren
- 10 David Coulthard (GB) McLaren
- 11 Ralf Schumacher (Ger) Jordan
- 12 To be announced (Ind) Jordan
- 13 Olivier Panis (Fr) Ligier
- 14 Jos Verstappen (Dut) Tyrrell
- 15 To be arranged (Ind) Ligier
- 16 Johnny Herbert (GB) Sauber
- 17 Michele Alboreto (Ita) Sauber
- 18 TBA Tyrrell
- 19 Mika Salo (Fin) Tyrrell
- 20 TBA Minardi
- 21 TBA Minardi
- 22 Rubens Barrichello (Bra) Stewart
- 23 Jan Magnussen (Den) Stewart
- 24 TBA Lola
- 25 TBA Lola

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Sacchi quits Italian job for the call of Milan

Football
RUPERT METCALF

Arrigo Sacchi has gone home. Bruised and battered by months of media persecution, the 50-year-old made a dignified exit from guiding the fortunes of the Italian national team and returned yesterday to Milan – the club where he made his name. The man who set the managerial merry-go-round in motion was, predictably, Silvio Berlusconi, the hillbilly media mogul who owns Milan. A late-night meeting at his villa on Sunday led to the resignation of Milan's unpopular coach, the Uruguayan Oscar Washington Tabarez, and a call by Berlusconi to Sacchi. That afternoon, Milan had suffered a 3-2 defeat at humble Piacenza in *Serie A* match, and action was called for. "I can't say no to Berlusconi. Milan calls me, I can only resign."

SACCHI'S CAREER

1948 Born in Fiesole, Italy.
1972 Leaves job as a shoe salesman for his father's factory to take on his first coaching job – at Fiorentina.
1980 Joins Juventus as youth team coach.
1982 Joins Parma as youth coach, then moves to Fiorentina's youth team.
1987 Joins Milan after impressing owner Silvio Berlusconi when Serie A's Parma knocked Milan out of Italian Cup.
1988 Wins league title with Milan.
1990 Wins European Cup and Italian Super Cup.



1990 Wins European Cup, European Super Cup and Italian Super Cup.
1992 Wins Intercontinental Cup.
1993 Wins Italian national coach.
1994 Wins Italian national coach.
1995 Wins Italian national coach.
1996 Wins Italian national coach.
1997 Wins Italian national coach.
1998 Wins Italian national coach.
1999 Wins Italian national coach.
2000 Wins Italian national coach.

Try to understand," Sacchi said yesterday. He had been coach of Italy since 1991, after five trophy-laden years at Milan, and he had a contract until 1998, but few people expected him to see out 1996, let alone another two years.

Sacchi took Italy to the 1994 World Cup final in Los Angeles, where they lost on penalties to Brazil, but he has been under intense pressure since his side made a humiliating first-round exit from the European Championship in England last summer. His last match in charge also ended in embarrassment: a 2-1 defeat in a friendly against Bosnia in Sarajevo last month. His final record was 34 wins, 10 draws and nine defeats in 53 matches.

Sacchi's critics, and there were many, said that he never had a settled side – he used almost 100 players in those 53 matches – and that he fell out with his key players too easily. Men like Gianluca Vialli and Roberto Baggio found themselves out of favour when they still had much to offer.

After the summons from Berlusconi, Sacchi coasted the Italian football federation late on Sunday to announce his resignation. "Let's just say it was in the air," Antonio Matarrese, the former chairman of the federation, said. "It's what so many Italians wanted."

Italy's next match is not until February, when they return to England for a World Cup qualifier, so there is no rush to appoint Sacchi's successor. The two leading candidates are the Under-21 coach Cesare Maldini, the father of the full-back Paolo Maldini, and Dino Zoff, the former goalkeeper and captain of the 1982 World Cup-winning side who is now the president of Lazio. Two men initially included among the likely successors ruled themselves out of the running last night: the Real Madrid coach Fabio Capello, who replaced Sacchi at Milan in 1991, and Giovanni Trapattoni, the Bayern Munich coach who won six *Serie A* titles when with Juventus.

But what of Milan? Since the unfortunate Tabarez replaced Capello in the summer they have looked like mere also-rans rather than front-runners in the Italian League – an intolerable situation for the San Siro faithful. They languish in ninth place in *Serie A* after Sunday's defeat, and will be eliminated from the European Champions' League if they lose at home to Norway's Rosenborg on Wednesday. Sacchi will be in charge for that match, when instant success will be demanded.

England A poised for sixth success

Cricket
MYLES HODGSON
reports from Canberra
ACT 218 & 140-4
England A 408

England A moved towards their sixth successive tour victory after being given the benefit of a controversial umpiring decision which enabled them to take control against Australian Capital Territory in Canberra. The tourists, resuming on 265 for 5, were dismissed for 408 to earn a 192-run first innings lead and by the close they had reduced ACT to 140 for 4.

But it was the dismissal of the ACT skipper, Mike Veletta, which dominated the day's play and put England in a position to claim a convincing victory in today's final day.

Veletta, who had batted nearly two hours for 68 and looked the main threat to the tourists' hopes, edged Hollock behind to slip Craig White, who appeared to scoop the ball up for the wicketkeeper Warren Hegg to take a diving catch.

However, Veletta clearly disputed the decision and stood his ground, resulting in the match referee ordering the ACT captain to report for a disciplinary hearing today to answer dissent charges.

Veletta had earlier compiled a 106-run partnership with Paul Evans before the spinner Peter Such, who claimed five wickets in the first innings, began to make a substantial contribution.

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Cobner calls for common approach

Rugby Union
CHRIS HEWITT

The latest confirmation of the gulf between the haves and have-nots of world rugby – England, Wales and France soundly beaten by out-of-season cootings from New Zealand, Australia and South Africa in the space of 24 hours – drew a call for northern hemisphere unity yesterday from one of the few voices of common sense still to be found in a British game more obsessed with raising money than raising standards.

Terry Cobner, the full-time director of rugby in Wales, was never one for cross-border harmony during his playing career as a fiercely patriotic, bruisingly hard loose forward; indeed, his interests barely extended beyond Pontypool Park, let alone the Severn Bridge.

But repeated reverses against the superpowers from south of the equator have persuaded him that the common approach is the only realistic solution. "The gap in skill and fitness levels is narrowing, but oowhere as quickly as we would like," the former Lions flanker said. "It is now time for the major European nations to hurry their problem together and come up with a programme that is best for the northern hemisphere as a whole."

While both England and the French have enjoyed victories

over all three southern nations since the turn of the decade, the overall European performance is the stuff of embarrassment. Wales have not recorded a win since beating Australia in the 1987 World Cup, Scotland's losing streak goes back to 1983 and Ireland's to 1979. Of the 83 full internationals played by British sides against the big trio over the last 20 years, 69 have been lost, many heavily.

Cobner wants to see a structured fixture programme agreed by the four home unions and France – progress may be made so that foot before Christmas – and is keen to expand the Heineken European Cup into a home and away format next year. "We can play some domestic rugby at the start of the season and then return to it at the end," he said, suggesting that the meat of the campaign should include up to 13 European matches for each participating club plus six full internationals, two of them against touring sides.

His prognosis for European rugby was not entirely apocalyptic. "We may not be strong individually at the moment, but I think the Lions selectors will be able to come up with a collective outfit capable of beating the Springboks in South Africa next summer. We have first-class people in charge of the Lions, men who have been there and done it and have strong ideas about how we should approach the tour. I'm encouraged by that."

Lomu also paid tribute to



How not to tackle: New Zealand's Jonah Lomu passes on the benefit of his experience to the next generation of rugby union players at a Reebok-sponsored skills session for children at Cardiff Arms Park yesterday. Photograph: Peter Jay

Lomu puts his faith in a blossoming future for England

Jonah Lomu, who helped the New Zealand Barbarians to their 34-19 victory over England at Twickenham on Saturday, believes that Jack Rowell's team will be leading contenders for victory in the 1999 World Cup. "This current England team is going to be a great side, no question about it," Lomu said yesterday. "They had a real go as us, didn't freeze up and will take a lot from the match. They are still young and are still learning."

Lomu, who was attending a

Reebok-sponsored skills session for youngsters at Cardiff Arms Park, acclaimed England's new outside-half, Mike Catt.

"I was very impressed with him," Lomu said. "He ran things well and read situations around him. I think his tactical kicking will improve because he's the type of player who wants to learn."

Lomu also paid tribute to

David Campese, who retired from international rugby after winning his 101st cap for Australia against Wales in Cardiff on Sunday.

"David Campese has always shown tremendous skills on the field, and I learnt so much from him just by watching the way he did things," Lomu said. "Lomu said he was now looking forward to a long run in the New Zealand first side after being dropped during last summer's Tri-Nations series against South Africa and Australia."

"It would obviously be annoying if your place was taken by a player who you feel is not as good as yourself. But that's not the case in New Zealand when you've got people like Glen Osborne and Eric Rush around. "I didn't feel especially hard done by being left out. That is part of the professional game but I never look back in the past. I'm always one to plan ahead for the future."

Lomu said he was delighted with the reception he had re-

ceived from his British fans, and was looking forward to turning out for the Welsh First Division club Ebbw Vale against an invitation XV tomorrow night.

Bristol give a senior debut to the scrum-half Richard Smith in tonight's Anglo-Welsh Cup game at home to Neath. Smith, 23, joined Bristol from Newbridge last week and scored a try for Bristol United in Saturday's victory over Clifton Wanderers.

The hooker Mark Regan and the lock Simo Shaw return

from England duty and the side also includes the Irish international stand-off Paul Burke and the flanker David Corkery.

The captain, Martin Corry, an England replacement against Italy, moves to No 8 to allow the coach, Alan Davies, the opportunity to cast his eyes over the France A back row. Smith, 23, joined Bristol from Newbridge last week and scored a try for Bristol United in Saturday's victory over Clifton Wanderers.

The hooker Mark Regan and the lock Simo Shaw return

Laura Dick, said: "Among others, we want to target the Italian community in Scotland. We will be using the press, radio and television to promote the match. We want to attract families in the game and have structured the ticket pricing accordingly."

Adults accompanying youngsters will pay £15 for themselves and £5 for each of their charges. A full house is not expected but already 21,000 tickets have been sold and the SRU is hoping for a crowd in excess of 30,000.

Channel 4 seal four-year television deal

Athletics
A new four-year television contract for British athletics with Channel 4 was confirmed last night.

The station will cover major meetings in a three-way deal, involving the British Athletic Federation and the British Athletics Association. The two bodies are setting up a joint company to run the meetings. Coverage will start with a European indoor circuit event in February.

Channel 4 take over from ITV, who ended a 12-year association with the sport this year, after failing to win the non-appearance of top athletes. Financial details have not been disclosed, but the contract will be worth less than the annual £1.5m paid by ITV.

On Boxing Day at a letter sponsored, another take all death change will be seen. The station will be seen in a three-way deal with Super League and World Rugby.

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SPORTING DIGEST

Football	
UEFA CUP 1st ROUND	Second legs
Manchester City (1) v Middlesbrough (1)	19.00
Other fixtures: Arsenal (1) v Valencia (1) 19.00; Borussia Dortmund (1) v Tottenham (1) 19.00; Feyenoord (1) v Monaco (1) 19.00; Lazio (1) v Fiorentina (1) 19.00; Real Madrid (1) v Barcelona (1) 19.00; Schalke 04 (1) v Club Brugge (1) 19.00.	
FA CUP 1st ROUND	Second legs
Reading v Tottenham (1) 19.00; Huddersfield v Peterborough (1) 19.00; Luton v York (1) 19.00; Millwall v Stockport (1) 19.00; Shrewsbury v Barnet (1) 19.00; Walsley v Bristol Rovers (1) 19.00; Wycombe v Middlesbrough (1) 19.00.	
2nd ROUND	First legs
Blackpool v Plymouth 19.00; Brentford v Huddersfield (1) 19.00; Bristol City v Walsley (1) 19.00; Burton v Preston (1) 19.00; Colchester v Peterborough (1) 19.00; Luton v York (1) 19.00; Millwall v Stockport (1) 19.00; Shrewsbury v Barnet (1) 19.00; Walsley v Bristol Rovers (1) 19.00; Wycombe v Middlesbrough (1) 19.00.	
3rd ROUND	First legs
Blackpool v Plymouth 19.00; Brentford v Huddersfield (1) 19.00; Bristol City v Walsley (1) 19.00; Burton v Preston (1) 19.00; Colchester v Peterborough (1) 19.00; Luton v York (1) 19.00; Millwall v Stockport (1) 19.00; Shrewsbury v Barnet (1) 19.00; Walsley v Bristol Rovers (1) 19.00; Wycombe v Middlesbrough (1) 19.00.	
4th ROUND	First legs
Blackpool v Plymouth 19.00; Brentford v Huddersfield (1) 19.00; Bristol City v Walsley (1) 19.00; Burton v Preston (1) 19.00; Colchester v Peterborough (1) 19.00; Luton v York (1) 19.00; Millwall v Stockport (1) 19.00; Shrewsbury v Barnet (1) 19.00; Walsley v Bristol Rovers (1) 19.00; Wycombe v Middlesbrough (1) 19.00.	
5th ROUND	First legs
Blackpool v Plymouth 19.00; Brentford v Huddersfield (1) 19.00; Bristol City v Walsley (1) 19.00; Burton v Preston (1) 19.00; Colchester v Peterborough (1) 19.00; Luton v York (1) 19.00; Millwall v Stockport (1) 19.00; Shrewsbury v Barnet (1) 19.00; Walsley v Bristol Rovers (1) 19.00; Wycombe v Middlesbrough (1) 19.00.	
6th ROUND	First legs
Blackpool v Plymouth 19.00; Brentford v Huddersfield (1) 19.00; Bristol City v Walsley (1) 19.00; Burton v Preston (1) 19.00; Colchester v Peterborough (1) 19.00; Luton v York (1) 19.00; Millwall v Stockport (1) 19.00; Shrewsbury v Barnet (1) 19.00; Walsley v Bristol Rovers (1) 19.00; Wycombe v Middlesbrough (1) 19.00.	
7th ROUND	First legs
Blackpool v Plymouth 19.00; Brentford v Huddersfield (1) 19.00; Bristol City v Walsley (1) 19.00; Burton v Preston (1) 19.00; Colchester v Peterborough (1) 19.00; Luton v York (1) 19.00; Millwall v Stockport (1) 19.00; Shrewsbury v Barnet (1) 19.00; Walsley v Bristol Rovers (1) 19.00; Wycombe v Middlesbrough (1) 19.00.	
8th ROUND	First legs
Blackpool v Plymouth 19.00; Brentford v Huddersfield (1) 19.00; Bristol City v Walsley (1) 19.00; Burton v Preston (1) 19.00; Colchester v Peterborough (1) 19.00; Luton v York (1) 19.00; Millwall v Stockport (1) 19.00; Shrewsbury v Barnet (1) 19.00; Walsley v Bristol Rovers (1) 19.00; Wycombe v Middlesbrough (1) 19.00.	
9th ROUND	First legs
Blackpool v Plymouth 19.00; Brentford v Huddersfield (1) 19.00; Bristol City v Walsley (1) 19.00; Burton v Preston (1) 19.00; Colchester v Peterborough (1) 19.00; Luton v York (1) 19.00; Millwall v Stockport (1) 19.00; Shrewsbury v Barnet (1) 19.00; Walsley v Bristol Rovers (1) 19.00; Wycombe v Middlesbrough (1) 19.00.	
10th ROUND	First legs
Blackpool v Plymouth 19.00; Brentford v Huddersfield (1) 19.00; Bristol City v Walsley (1) 19.00; Burton v Preston (1) 19.00; Colchester v Peterborough (1) 19.00; Luton v York (1) 19.00; Millwall v Stockport (1) 19.00; Shrewsbury v Barnet (1) 19.00; Walsley v Bristol Rovers (1) 19.00; Wycombe v Middlesbrough (1) 19.00.	
11th ROUND	First legs
Blackpool v Plymouth 19.00; Brentford v Huddersfield (1) 19.00; Bristol City v Walsley (1) 19.00; Burton v Preston (1) 19.00; Colchester v Peterborough (1) 19.00; Luton v York (1) 19.00; Millwall v Stockport (1) 19.00; Shrewsbury v Barnet (1) 19.00; Walsley v Bristol Rovers (1) 19.00; Wycombe v Middlesbrough (1) 19.00.	
12th ROUND	First legs
Blackpool v Plymouth 19.00; Brentford v Huddersfield (1) 19.00; Bristol City v Walsley (1) 19.00; Burton v Preston (1) 19.00; Colchester v Peterborough (1) 19.00; Luton v York (1) 19.00; Millwall v Stockport (1) 19.00; Shrewsbury v Barnet (1) 19.00; Walsley v Bristol Rovers (1) 19.00; Wycombe v Middlesbrough (1) 19.00.	
13th ROUND	First legs
Blackpool v Plymouth 19.00; Brentford v Huddersfield (1) 19.00; Bristol City v Walsley (1) 19.00; Burton v Preston (1) 19.00; Colchester v Peterborough (1) 19.00; Luton v York (1) 19.00; Millwall v Stockport (1) 19.00; Shrewsbury v Barnet (1) 19.00; Walsley v Bristol Rovers (1) 19.00; Wycombe v Middlesbrough (1) 19.00.	
14th ROUND	First legs
Blackpool v Plymouth 19.00; Brentford v Huddersfield (1) 19.00; Bristol City v Walsley (1) 19.00; Burton v Preston (1) 19.00; Colchester v Peterborough (1) 19.00; Luton v York (1) 19.00; Millwall v Stockport (1) 19.00; Shrewsbury v Barnet (1) 19.00; Walsley v Bristol Rovers (1) 19.00; Wycombe v Middlesbrough (1) 19.00.	
15th ROUND	First legs
Blackpool v Plymouth 19.00; Brentford v Huddersfield (1) 19.00; Bristol City v Walsley (1) 19.00; Burton v Preston (1) 19.00; Colchester v Peterborough (1) 19.00; Luton v York (1) 19.00; Millwall v Stockport (1) 19.00; Shrewsbury v Barnet (1) 19.00; Walsley v Bristol Rovers (1) 19.00; Wycombe v Middlesbrough (1) 19.00.	
16th ROUND	First legs
Blackpool v Plymouth 19.00; Brentford v Huddersfield (1) 19.00; Bristol City v Walsley (1) 19.00; Burton v Preston (1) 19.00; Colchester v Peterborough (1) 19.00; Luton v York (1) 19.00; Millwall v Stockport (1) 19.00; Shrewsbury v Barnet (1) 19.00; Walsley v Bristol Rovers (1) 19.00; Wycombe v Middlesbrough (1) 19.00.	
17th ROUND	First legs
Blackpool v Plymouth 19.00; Brentford v Huddersfield (1) 19.00; Bristol City v Walsley (1) 19.00; Burton v Preston (1) 19.00; Colchester v Peterborough (1) 19.00; Luton v York (1) 19.00; Millwall v Stockport (1) 19.00; Shrewsbury v Barnet (1) 19.00; Walsley v Bristol Rovers (1) 19.00; Wycombe v Middlesbrough (1) 19.00.	
18th ROUND	First legs
Blackpool v Plymouth 19.00; Brentford v Huddersfield (1) 19.00; Bristol City v Walsley (1) 19.00; Burton v Preston (1) 19.00; Colchester v Peterborough (1) 19.00; Luton v York (1) 19.00; Millwall v Stockport (1) 19.00; Shrewsbury v Barnet (1) 19.00; Walsley v Bristol Rovers (1) 19.00; Wycombe v Middlesbrough (1) 19.00.	
19th ROUND	First legs
Blackpool v Plymouth 19.00; Brentford v Huddersfield (1) 19.00; Bristol City v Walsley (1) 19.00; Burton v Preston (1) 19.00; Colchester v Peterborough (1) 19.00; Luton v York (1) 19.00; Millwall v Stockport (1) 19.00; Shrewsbury v Barnet (1) 19.00; Walsley v Bristol Rovers (1) 19.00; Wycombe v Middlesbrough (1) 19.00.	
20th ROUND	First legs
Blackpool v Plymouth 19.00; Brentford v Huddersfield (1) 19.00; Bristol City v Walsley (1) 19.00; Burton v Preston (1) 19.00; Colchester v Peterborough (1) 19.00; Luton v York (1) 19.00; Millwall v Stockport (1) 19.00; Shrewsbury v Barnet (1) 19.00; Walsley v Bristol Rovers (1) 19.00; Wycombe v Middlesbrough (1) 19.00.	
21st ROUND	First legs
Blackpool v Plymouth 19.00; Brentford v Huddersfield (1) 19.00; Bristol City v Walsley (1) 19.00; Burton v Preston (1) 19.00; Colchester v Peterborough (1) 19.00; Luton v York (1) 19.00; Millwall v Stockport (1) 19.00; Shrewsbury v Barnet (1) 19.00; Walsley v Bristol Rovers (1) 19.00; Wycombe v Middlesbrough (1) 19.00.	
22nd ROUND	First legs
Blackpool v Plymouth 19.00; Brentford v Huddersfield (1) 19.00; Bristol City v Walsley (1) 19.00; Burton v Preston (1) 19.00; Colchester v Peterborough (1) 19.00; Luton v York (1) 19.00; Millwall v Stockport (1) 19.00; Shrewsbury v Barnet (1) 19.00; Walsley v Bristol Rovers (1) 19.00; Wycombe v Middlesbrough (1) 19.00.	
23rd ROUND	First legs
Blackpool v Plymouth 19.00; Brentford v Huddersfield (1) 19.00; Bristol City v Walsley (1) 19.00; Burton v Preston (1) 19.00; Colchester v Peterborough (1) 19.00; Luton v York (1) 19.00; Millwall v Stockport (1) 19.00; Shrewsbury v Barnet (1) 19.00; Walsley v Bristol Rovers (1) 19.00; Wycombe v Middlesbrough (1) 19.00.	
24th ROUND	First legs
Blackpool v Plymouth 19.00; Brentford v Huddersfield (1) 19.00; Bristol City v Walsley (1) 19.00; Burton v Preston (1) 19.00; Colchester v Peterborough (1) 19.00; Luton v York (1) 19.00; Millwall v Stockport (1) 19.00; Shrewsbury v Barnet (1) 19.00; Walsley v Bristol Rovers (1) 19.00; Wycombe v Middlesbrough (1) 19.00.	
25th ROUND	First legs
Blackpool v Plymouth 19.00; Brentford v Huddersfield (1) 19.00; Bristol City v Walsley (1) 19.00; Burton v Preston (1) 19.00; Colchester v Peterborough (1) 19.00; Luton v York (1) 19.00; Millwall v Stockport (1) 19.00; Shrewsbury v Barnet (1) 19.00; Walsley v Bristol Rovers (1) 19.00; Wycombe v Middlesbrough (1) 19.00.	
26th ROUND	First legs
Blackpool v Plymouth 19.00; Brentford v Huddersfield (1) 19.00; Bristol City v Walsley (1) 19.00; Burton v Preston (1) 19.00; Colchester v Peterborough (1) 19.00; Luton v York (1) 19.00; Millwall v Stockport (1) 19.00; Shrewsbury v Barnet (1) 19.00; Walsley v Bristol Rovers (1) 19.00; Wycombe v Middlesbrough (1) 19.00.	
27th ROUND	First legs
Blackpool v Plymouth 19.00; Brentford v Huddersfield (1) 19.00; Bristol City v Walsley (1) 19.00; Burton v Preston (1) 19.00; Colchester v Peterborough (1) 19.00; Luton v York (1) 19.00; Millwall v Stockport (1) 19.00; Shrewsbury v Barnet (1) 19.00; Walsley v Bristol Rovers (1) 19.00; Wycombe v Middlesbrough (1) 19.00.	
28th ROUND	First legs
Blackpool v Plymouth 19.00; Brentford v Huddersfield (1) 19.00; Bristol City v Walsley (1) 19.00; Burton v Preston (1) 19.00; Colchester v Peterborough (1) 19.00; Luton v York (1) 19.00; Millwall v Stockport (1) 19.00; Shrewsbury v Barnet (1) 19.00; Walsley v Bristol Rovers (1) 19.00; Wycombe v Middlesbrough (1) 19.00.	
29th ROUND	First legs
Blackpool v Plymouth 19.00; Brentford v Huddersfield (1) 19.00; Bristol City v Walsley (1) 19.00; Burton v Preston (1) 19.00; Colchester v Peterborough (1) 19.00; Luton v York (1) 19.00; Millwall v Stockport (1) 19.00; Shrewsbury v Barnet (1) 19.00; Walsley v Bristol Rovers (1) 19.00; Wycombe v Middlesbrough (1) 19.00.	
30th ROUND	First legs
Blackpool v Plymouth 19.00; Brentford v Huddersfield (1) 19.00; Bristol City v Walsley (1) 19.00; Burton v Preston (1) 19.00; Colchester v Peterborough (1) 19.00; Luton v York (1) 19.00; Millwall v Stockport (1) 19.00; Shrewsbury v Barnet (1) 19.00; Walsley v Bristol Rovers (1) 19.00; Wycombe v Middlesbrough (1) 19.00.	

American football									
<p>NFL Baltimore 23 Pittsburgh 17 Oakland 24 Tampa Bay 24 Cincinnati 24 Kansas City 24 13 Dallas 10 (OT), Jacksonville 30 Cincinnati 77 Minnesota 10 Cleveland 10, Pittsburgh 10 Arizona 14 Denver 24 Seattle 17, St Louis 26 New Orleans 10, Houston 35 NY Jets 10 Oakland 17 Atlanta 10, Tampa Bay 24 San Diego 7</p>									
AMERICAN FOOTBALL CONFERENCE									
EASTERN DIVISION									
New England	9	A	T	0	355	295	PA		
Buffalo	9	A	0	0	287	241			
Indianapolis	9	A	0	0	291	266			
NY Jets	12	A	0	0	221	388			
Pittsburgh	9	A	0	0	298	211			
Houston	9	A	0	0	291	286			
Jacksonville	9	A	0	0	283	268			
Cincinnati	9	A	0	0	269	315			
Dallas	9	A	0	0	320	369			
WESTERN DIVISION									
Denver	12	A	0	0	351	199			
San Francisco	9	A	0	0	297	250			
Kansas City	9	A	0	0	277	220			
Oakland	9	A	0	0	274	324			
San Diego	9	A	0	0	328	317			
NATIONAL FOOTBALL CONFERENCE									
EASTERN DIVISION									
Patriots	9	A	0	0	303	265			
Philadelphia	9	A	0	0	294	201			
Washington	9	A	0	0	331	251			
Atlanta	9	A	0	0	293	265			
NY Giants	9	A	0	0	200	250			
WESTERN DIVISION									
Seattle	9	A	0	0	293	265			
Green Bay	10	A	0	0	246	193			
Minnesota	9	A	0	0	243	245			
Chicago	9	A	0	0	250	245			
Detroit	9	A	0	0	283	220			
Carolina	9	A	0	0	153	243			
NATIONAL FOOTBALL CONFERENCE									
WESTERN DIVISION									
San Francisco	9	A	0	0	291	180			
Seattle	9	A	0	0	291	245			
St Louis	9	A	0	0	246	334			
Atlanta	9	A	0	0	234	259			
San Diego	9	A	0	0	184	291			
Athenletics									
<p>Kornet's David Kornen will run in the BULLY cross-country Durham on 28 December. Kornen, 20, has chopped nearly five seconds off his 3,000m record.</p>									
Basketball									
<p>NBA Golden State 95 Portland 70, Detroit 95 Philadelphia 95 Utah 95 Seattle 90, LA Lakers 104 Denver 96</p>									
BASKETBALL LEAGUE: Chester Jets 76 4041 Points 100, 100, 100, 100, 100, 100, 100, 100, 75 69 69 69 20, Worcester 18, Austin 13									
Baseball									
<p>Manhattan 145 141 140 140 140 140 140 140 140 140 140 140 140 140 140 140 140 140 140 140 1</p>									

The cup runneth over
France win the greatest Davis
Cup final in history, page 24

sport

Rugby on television
Alan Watkins questions the BBC's
treatment of viewers, page 24

Stewart keeps Russell out in the cold



Cricket

MARK BALDWIN
reports from Harare

Twelve months ago almost to the day, Jack Russell was a national hero. Along with Ronnie Irani, he was yesterday dropped by England for today's opening four-day fixture of the tour against Mashonaland in Harare.

Russell, understandably upset, said: "It's a bitter blow inside. I would be telling lies if I said this doesn't hurt."

On 4 December last year, Russell batted for more than four hours alongside Mike

Atherton on a dramatic final afternoon to save the Johannesburg Test - having earlier in the game taken a world wicket-keeping record of 11 catches.

However, Alec Stewart has been confirmed as England's first-choice wicketkeeper again - leaving Russell out in the cold. David Lloyd, the England coach, said Russell's omission was inevitable once the management had decided that five front-line bowlers were needed to provide a "cutting edge" to England's attack.

Three Tests against New Zealand follow in the new year after the two Tests and three

one-day internationals against Zimbabwe either side of Christmas. Russell, however, said he was confident he could cope with being left on the sidelines, even if it became the long-term policy.

"Yes I could handle it because I have been in this position before," he said. "It will be painful not to play and it is a strange old game when you think back to a year ago. But there are no guarantees in life, I am not the only one not playing tomorrow, and I will be supporting the side as well as I can. It won't be a surprise now if the worst happens for me and

I am left out of the Tests, but there is not very much cricket to be played before then and the guys playing in these four-day games are the ones most likely to be picked in the first Test."

"I have to try to remain optimistic. Anything can happen and I will certainly be making sure I am ready for every game. It's the balance of the side thing again. The all-rounder position is the key and fair play to Alec because he's a good all-rounder cricketer. The management have had to decide what they think their best side is and what their best policy is - that's fair enough."

Lloyd agreed that England's selection was a guide to the thinking for the first Test against Zimbabwe, which starts on 18 December. "We only have two four-day games before the international matches and we have to get our balance right. We need the cutting edge of five bowlers and Jack has been the casualty of that."

"Nick Knight will now open with the captain and Nasser Hussain, Graham Thorpe and John Crawley all drop down one place, which they are happy to do. We wanted to keep the batting order as stable as possible."

Fast bowlers Andy Caddick

and Darren Gough both play despite suffering from the after effects of illness and a badly blistered left foot respectively. Zimbabwe's Test captain, Alistair Campbell, will lead a Mashonaland side which includes the leg spinner Paul Strang and leading batsman Dave Houghton. Also playing is fast bowler Eddo Brandes, whose three early wickets with the new ball helped embarrass England in their game against a President's XI on Sunday.

England A, page 25

Laudrup joins Rangers' injured

Football

Brian Laudrup has been added to Walter Smith's growing injury list as Rangers prepare for a Champions' League final in Auxerre tomorrow.

Laudrup suffered an ankle injury during Sunday's 3-0 victory over Aberdeen at Pittodrie which took Rangers five points clear at the top.

The Danish international will join fellow foreigners Jörg Albertz and Joachim Björklund on the sidelines for the trip to France.

Paul Gascoigne, the England midfielder player, is suspended again in the third instalment of his four-match UEFA ban for being sent off against Ajax in October.

Archie Knox, the Rangers assistant manager, said: "It is obviously a major blow to us for Wednesday given the rich vein of form which Brian has been in."

Laudrup scored the second goal at Pittodrie with his ninth of the season and Rangers will be desperate to have him fit to take on Hibernian at Ibrox on Saturday and Dundee United at Tannadice next Tuesday.

As well as Laudrup, Albertz, Björklund and Gascoigne, Rangers have other players ruled out including Stuart McCall, Gordon Durie and Alex Cleland.

Youngsters such as Greg Shields and Scott Wilson will both be included and skipper Richard Gough should be passed fit despite taking a knock on Sunday.

The travelling party will also include Trevor Steven and Alan McLaren. McLaren has not played a first-team game this season after knee surgery but is almost ready to return. Charlie Miller, Ian Ferguson and Derek McInnes are all in contention for midfield places.

The head of security at Rangers has warned that a serious accident is waiting to happen unless missile-throwing thugs are stopped.

Alistair Hood, who has more than 10 years experience of dealing with crowd behaviour at Ibrox, was speaking in the wake of the latest violent act by supporters at Pittodrie when Aberdeen supporters threw bottles at the Rangers club coach. No body was on board and no serious damage done to the bus.

Aberdeen now studying video film to try to trace the culprit. The incident comes after an outbreak of coin-throwing at Stark's Park, Tynecastle and Celtic Park in recent matches.

"I am concerned that a serious injury will be sustained either inside or outside a football ground if missiles continue to be thrown," Hood said.

"It is senseless and needless but it is only a matter of time before someone is badly hurt if it carries on. People talk about closed circuit TV as a pancea for this but unless you have a camera trained on the culprit then there is very little you can do to trace the person."

"Clubs are doing what they can but if your back is turned and somebody throws something then there is very little you can do."

Hood insists he does not detect a rise in crime in the recent past compared to 10 or 15 years ago but added: "We have to keep being vigilant and we can't take the foot off the pedal. Like the police, football clubs rely on other supporters being willing to point out those who have done something wrong."

Hood has seen around 400 supporters at Ibrox for various offences and insists banning fans from their home stadium is a deterrent.

Aberdeen have said they will consider that a possible punishment if they can trace the fans involved in the incident.

David Johnston, the general manager at Pittodrie, said yesterday: "We are co-operating with the police on this and there has been no movement on it so far."

"We are trying to promote football yet a couple of senseless people do this. It shouldn't be forgotten that we have around 20,000 fans inside the ground and not one incident in 10 years."

"Everybody was in their correct area and from a policing and stewarding point of view the match went off well."

Paolo Di Camillo, the Celtic player, will miss a two-match spell after Saturday's red card against Hearts. Di Camillo is automatically suspended for tonight's night's rescheduled Premier Division match against Dunfermline at East End Park.

The Italian will also be banned when Celtic face Rangers at Stark's Park on Saturday 14 December.

W Indies' shambles plumbs depths

Cricket

TONY COZIER
reports from Sydney
Australia 331 & 312-4 dec
West Indies 304 & 27-0

West Indies cricket has had to endure a host of embarrassing experiences over the past couple of years. The fourth day of the second Test yesterday was the latest addition to the long and demeaning list.

It did not have quite the same traumatic impact as the loss to Kenya or the semi-final collapse to Australia in the World Cup nine months ago. Nor was it as critical as the heavy defeat in Barbados and Kingston that allowed Australia to capture the Frank Worrell Trophy that the West Indies are seeking to regain.

But, in more than 30 years watching them in Test cricket, I cannot recall as shoddy a performance. An edged catch from Mark Waugh eluded the wicket-keeper Courtney Browne, who had dropped him the previous afternoon. Another escaped the clutches of Carl Hooper, usually the safest of catchers.

Ground balls repeatedly went through the legs of careworn fielders, often to the boundary, and the throwing was weak and inaccurate. Alert Australian batsmen gathered sharp singles almost at will. Yet, ironically, the West Indies still had a glimmer of hope of winning the match

and levelling the series as they entered the last day.

Mark Taylor's bold decision set them a target of 340 in a minimum of 104 overs and their openers got through the 12 overs at the end of the day, erasing 27 of the required runs.

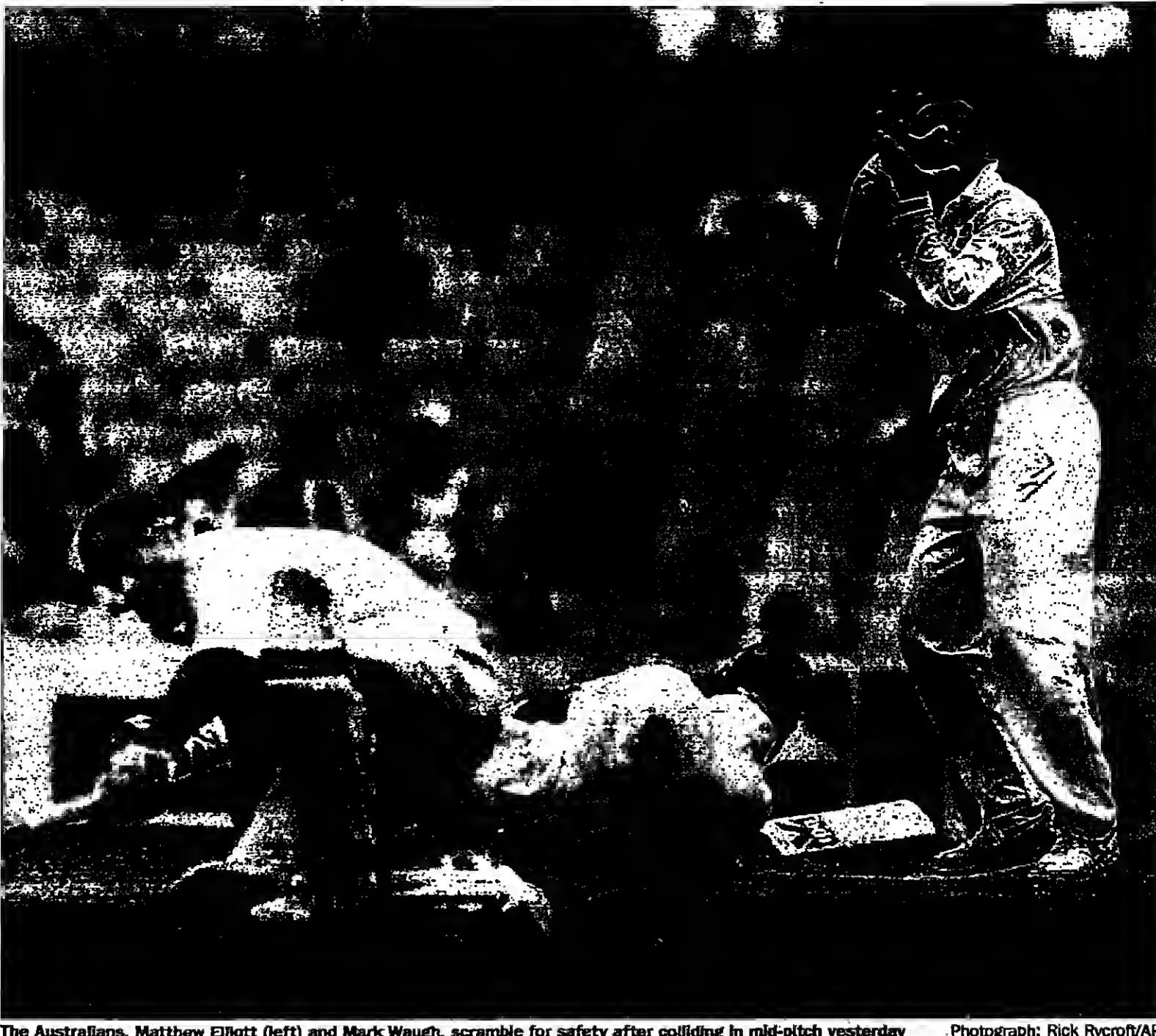
No team has ever totalled more than Australia's 276 for 4 against England 99 years ago to win a Test at the Sydney Cricket Ground and a sluggish, turning pitch that has rendered stroke-making difficult did not encourage the prospects of such a record being erased.

It was a positive, and courageous, decision against opposition, including as dangerous a batsman as Brian Lara, whose previous Test match on the ground brought him his glorious 277 four years ago.

Three times in the past - Bridgetown in 1994 and Lord's in 1995 against England, and Brisbane last week against Australia - Lara has been unbeaten entering the final day with similar totals as goals. All three times he was out within the first hour and the West Indies lost.

His form on this score has been patchy but there was no more appropriate time for him to return to his devastating best. His perennially routed confrontation with the leg spinner, Shane Warne, Australia's most potent weapon, was once more eagerly anticipated.

Almost everyone was culpable in the West Indies shambles, the nature of which was accu-



The Australians, Matthew Elliott (left) and Mark Waugh, scramble for safety after colliding in mid-pitch yesterday

Photograph: Rick Rycroft/AP

ately captured by the hash made of a run-out chance when both Australian batsmen, Matthew Elliott and Waugh, were scrambling on their hands and knees after a spectacular mid-pitch collision as they sprinted for a second run.

As both groggily scrambled to their feet, Courtney Walsh, the

captain, a modest fielder at the best of times, but by comparison with his team-mates, Leanne Constantine reincarnated on the day, picked the ball up and flicked the return to Hooper, the bowler.

No more than three yards from the stumps and with Waugh at his mercy in front of

him, Hooper chose to hurl the ball to Browne at the opposite end. It gave the desperate Elliott, 78 and in sight of 100 in his second Test, the split-second he needed to dive and slide his bat over the crease before the keeper could break the stumps, a decision so close it needed the confirmation of the TV replay.

As it was, Elliott, the tall left-handed opener, tore ligaments in his right knee and had to go off. Fourth day Australia won Test Australia - First innings 331, G S Bennett: C A Walsh 5-80.

WEST INDIES: First innings 304 (S I Campbell 77, G D McGrath 4-82).

Australia - Second innings Courtney 77, G D McGrath 4-82.

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